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East of Suez and the Commonwealth
1964–1971

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BRITISH DOCUMENTS ON THE END OF EMPIRE

General Editor S R Ashton
Project Chairman A N Porter

Series A Volume 5

**East of Suez
and the
Commonwealth
1964–1971**

Editors

**S R ASHTON
Wm ROGER LOUIS**

Part II

**EUROPE, RHODESIA,
COMMONWEALTH**

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1964–1971

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Abbreviations: parts I–III

AA	Automobile Association
AID	Agency for International Development
AMDA	Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement
ANF	Atlantic Nuclear Force
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand and United States (Pact)
AOC	air officer commanding
ASA	Association of South-East Asia
AUS	assistant under-secretary (of state)
BAC	British Air Command/British Aircraft Corporation
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDEEP	British Documents on the End of Empire Project
BEA	British European Airways
BIOT	British Indian Ocean Territory
BMC	British Motor Corporation
BNEC	British National Export Council
BOAC	British Overseas Airways Corporation
BOAR	British Army of the Rhine
BP	British Petroleum
BPP	British Protected Persons
BSIP	British Solomon Islands Protectorate
BVI	British Virgin Islands
CAB	Cabinet
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CDC	Colonial/Commonwealth Development Corporation
CDS	chief of the defence staff
CD&W	colonial development and welfare
CEC	Commonwealth Economic Committee
CELU	Commonwealth Education Liaison Unit
CENTO	Central Treaty Organisation (Turkey, UK, Pakistan, Iran)
CFP	Compagnie Française des Pétroles (Total)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
cif	cost in freight
CINC	commander-in-chief
CINCFE	commander-in-chief, Far East
CO	Colonial Office/ Commonwealth Office
COI	Central Office of Information
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Soviet bloc)
Con	Conservative Party (UK)
COS	Chiefs of Staff

CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CPG	Chinese People's Government
CRO	Commonwealth Relations Office
CSA	Commonwealth Sugar Agreement
CSD	Civil Service Department
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DEA	Department of Economic Affairs
DEP	Department of Employment and Productivity
DES	Department of Education and Science
DHC	deputy high commissioner
DOP(C)	(Cabinet) Defence and Oversea Policy Committee
DSAO	Diplomatic Service Administration Office
DTC	Department of Technical Co-operation
DTD	Dependent Territories Department/Division
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DUS	deputy under-secretary (of state)
EAP	Eastern Aden Protectorate
ECAFE	Economic Commission for Asia and Far East
ECFA	Economic Commission for Asia
ECGD	Export Credit Guarantee Department
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defence Community/ Economic Development Committee
EEC	European Economic Community
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Commission
FAA	Fleet Air Arm
FARELF	Far East Land Forces
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FLOSY	Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen
FM	field marshal
FMG	Federal Military Government (Nigeria)
FO	Foreign Office
fob	free on board
FSA	Foreign Service Assistance
GAP	gross annual product
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GEIC	Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony
GNP	gross national product
GOC	general officer commanding
HC	high commissioner
HE	His Excellency/high explosives
HEO	higher executive officer
HMOCS	Her Majesty's Oversea Civil Service
HO	Home Office
<i>H of C Debs</i>	House of Commons Debates (Hansard)
HQMEC	Headquarters Middle East Command
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICI	Imperial Chemical Industries

IDA	International Development Association
idi	illegal declaration of independence
IFB	Independent Forward Bloc (Mauritius)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPBA	India, Pakistan and Burma Association
IRD	Information Research Department (FO)
IS	internal security
ISA	(Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defence for) International Security Affairs (US)
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KCB	Knight Commander of the Bath
KCMG	Knight Commander of St Michael and St George
KCVO	Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order
KMT	Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party)
KPU	Kenya People's Union
Lab	Labour Party (UK)
ldc	less developed countries
MCA	Malaysian Chinese Association/Muslim Committee for Action (Mauritius)
MEA	Ministry of external affairs/minister for external affairs
MELF	Middle East Land Forces
MFN	most favoured nation
MLF	Multilateral Force
MLP	Mauritius Labour Party
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MP	member of parliament
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration (US)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCO	non-commissioned officer
NIBMAR	no independence before majority rule (or before majority African rule)
NLF	National Liberation Front (Aden)
NPC	Northern People's Congress (Nigeria)
NT	New Territories (Hong Kong)
NTS	Northern Trucial States
NZBC	New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation
OAS	Organisation of American States
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OCS	Oversea Civil Service
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
ODM	Ministry of Overseas Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPD	Oversea Policy and Defence (UK Cabinet) Committee
OPD(O)	Oversea Policy and Defence (Official) Committee
OSAS	Overseas Service Aid Scheme
PAP	People's Action Party (Singapore)
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party)

PLP	Parliamentary Labour Party
PM	prime minister
PMD	Prime Minister's Department
PMM	Prime Ministers' Meeting
PMSD	Parti Mauricien Sociale Démocrate (Social Democratic Party of Mauritius)
PNC	People's National Congress (British Guiana/Guyana)
POL	petroleum, oil, lubricants
PPP	People's Progressive Party (British Guiana/Guyana)
PSP	People's Socialist Party (Aden)
PUS	permanent under-secretary (of state)
PWD	Public Works department
qr	quota restriction
RAF	Royal Air Force
RBC	Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation
RBMR	Royal Brunei Malay Regiment
RE	Royal Engineers
RF	Rhodesian Front
RISCO	Rhodesian Iron and Steel Corporation
RMA	Royal Malta Artillery
RN	Royal Navy
RRAF	Royal Rhodesian Air Force
RRB	Race Relations Board
Rsigns	Royal Signals
RTV	Rhodesian Television
SAA	South Arabian Airforce/Army
SACEUR	supreme allied commander, Europe
SAF	Saudi Arabia/Sultan (of Oman's) Air Force
SAL	South Arabian League (Aden)
SAS	Special Air Service
SASA	South Atlantic and South America
SB	Special Branch
SBA	Sovereign Base Area (Cyprus)
SDP	Seychelles Democratic Party
SEAD	South-East Asia Department (FO)
SEATO	South-East Asia Treaty Organisation
SNOWI	senior naval officer, West Indies
SPUP	Seychelles People's United Party
TAER	Territorial Army Emergency Reserve
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
tel	telegram
TOS	Trucial Oman Scouts
UAC	Unified Arab Command
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAR	United Arab Republic
UARAF	United Arab Republic Air Force
UDI	unilateral declaration of independence
UF	United Front (British Guiana/Guyana)

UF	United Front Party (Rhodesia)
UK	United Kingdom
UKMIS	United Kingdom Mission (UN, New York)
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation
UNCTAD	United Nations Commission for Trade and Development
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Project
US(A)	United States (of America)
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VCGS	vice-chief of the general staff
VOA	Voice of America
VSO	Voluntary Service Organisation
WCP	World Council of Peace
WEU	West European Union
WIAS	West Indian Associated States
ZANU(PF)	Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front)
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union

Principal holders of offices 1964–1971

Labour governments 16 Oct 1964–19 June 1970

1. *Ministers*

(a) *Cabinet ministers*

Prime minister	Mr J H Wilson (16 Oct 1964)
Lord chancellor	Lord Gardiner (16 Oct 1964)
First secretary of state and (until Aug 1967) secretary of state for economic affairs	Mr G A Brown (16 Oct 1964) Mr M M Stewart (11 Aug)
Chancellor of Exchequer	Mr L J Callaghan (16 Oct 1964) Mr R H Jenkins (30 Nov 1967)
S of S foreign affairs foreign and Commonwealth affairs from 17 Oct 1968	Mr P C Gordon Walker (16 Oct 1964) Mr M M Stewart (22 Jan 1965) Mr G A Brown (11 Aug 1966) Mr M M Stewart (16 Mar 1968)
S of S Home Department	Sir F Soskice (18 Oct 1964) Mr R H Jenkins (23 Dec 1965) Mr L J Callaghan (30 Nov 1967)
S of S defence	Mr D W Healey (16 Oct 1964)
S of S colonies came under Commonwealth affairs, 1 Aug 1966, office discontinued, Jan 1967	Mr A Greenwood (16 Oct 1964) Lord Longford (23 Dec 1965) Mr F Lee (6 Apr 1966)
S of S Commonwealth relations Commonwealth affairs from 1 Aug 1966 (office discontinued, 17 Oct 1968)	Mr A G Bottomley (16 Oct 1964) Mr H W Bowden (11 Aug 1966) Mr G R Thomson (29 Aug 1967)
President of the Board of Trade	Mr D P T Jay (16 Oct 1964) Mr A Crosland (29 Aug 1967) Mr R Mason (12 Oct 1969)

Minister of overseas development office not in Cabinet from 29 Aug 1967	Mrs Barbara Castle (18 Oct 1964) Mr A Greenwood (23 Dec 1965) Mr A G Bottomley (11 Aug 1966)
---	--

(b) *Junior ministers*(i) *Foreign Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office from 17 Oct 1968*

Minister of state	Lord Caradon (16 Oct 1964–19 June 1970) Mr G R Thomson (19 Oct 1964–6 Apr 1966) Mr W E Padley (19 Oct 1964–7 Jan 1967) Lord Chalfont (23 Oct 1964–19 June 1970) Mrs Eirene White (11 Apr 1966–7 Jan 1967) Mr G R Thomson (7 Jan 1967–29 Aug 1967) Mr F W Mulley (7 Jan 1967–6 Oct 1969) Mr G O Roberts (29 Aug 1967–13 Oct 1969) Lord Shepherd (17 Oct 1968–19 June 1970)
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Parliamentary under-secretary of state	Lord Walston (20 Oct 1964) Mr W T Rodgers (7 Jan 1967) Mr M A Foley (3 July 1968) Mr W C Whitlock (17 Oct 1968) Mr E T Luard (13 Oct 1969)
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(ii) *Colonial Office (until 1 Aug 1966)*

Parliamentary under-secretary of state	Mrs Eirene White (20 Oct 1964–11 Oct 1965) Lord Taylor (20 Oct 1964–11 Apr 1966) Lord Beswick (11 Oct 1965–1 Aug 1966) Mr J T Stonehouse (6 Apr 1966–7 Jan 1967)
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(iii) *Commonwealth Relations Office, Commonwealth Office,
1 Aug 1966–17 Oct 1968*

Minister of state	Mr C Hughes (19 Oct 1964–6 Apr 1966) Mrs Judith Hart (6 Apr 1966–26 July 1967) Mr G Thomas (7 Jan 1967–6 Apr 1968) Lord Shepherd (26 July 1967–19 June 1970)
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Parliamentary under-secretary of state	Lord Taylor (20 Oct 1964–11 Apr 1966) Lord Beswick (11 Oct 1965–26 July 1967) Mr J T Stonehouse (1 Aug 1966–7 Jan 1967) Mr W C Whitlock (26 July 1967–19 June 1970)
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(iv) *Ministry of Overseas Development*

Minister	Mr R E Prentice (29 Aug 1967) Mrs Judith Hart (6 Oct 1969)
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*Conservative government 19 June 1970 (until 1971)*1. *Ministers*(a) *Cabinet ministers*

Prime minister	Mr E R G Heath (19 June 1970)
Lord chancellor	Lord Hailsham (20 June 1970)
Chancellor of Exchequer	Mr I N Macleod (20 June 1970) Mr A P L Barber (25 July 1970)
S of S foreign and Commonwealth affairs	Sir A Douglas-Home (20 June 1970)
S of S Home Department	Mr R Maudling (20 June 1970)
S of S defence	Lord Carrington (20 June 1970)
President of Board of Trade S of S for Trade and Industry and president of Board of Trade from 15 Oct 1970	Mr M Noble (20 June 1970) Mr J Davies (15 Oct 1970)

(b) *Junior ministers*(i) *Foreign and Commonwealth Office*

Minister of state	Mr J Godber (23 June 1970)
Parliamentary under-secretary of state	Marquess of Lothian (24 June 1970) Mr A H F Royle (24 June 1970) Mr J A Kershaw (24 June 1970)

(ii) *Ministry of overseas development (under FCO from 15 Oct 1970, when announcement made, but change formally made 12 Nov 1970)*

Minister	Mr R F Wood (23 June 1970)
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Civil servants

(a) <i>Secretary to the Cabinet</i>	Sir B Trend (1963–1973)
(b) <i>Foreign Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office from 17 Oct 1968</i>	
(i) Permanent under-secretary of state and head of Diplomatic Service from 1968	Sir Harold Caccia (1962–1965) Sir Paul Gore-Both (1965–1969) Sir Denis Greenhill (1969–1973)
(ii) Deputy under-secretary of state (select) ¹	Viscount Hood (1962–1969) Sir Geoffrey Harrison (1963–1965)

¹ Officials below the rank of deputy under-secretary of state at the FO/FCO are identified in footnotes.

- Sir Bernard Burrows (1963–1966)
 Sir John Nicholls (1963–1966)
 Sir Roger Allen (1965–1967)
 (Sir) Denis Greenhill (KCMG 1967)
 (1966–1969)
 Sir Denis Allen (1967–1969)
 Sir John Rennie (1967–1974)
 Sir Arthur Galsworthy (1968–1969)
 Sir Arthur Snelling (1968–1969)
 Sir E Peck (1968–1970)
 Sir John Johnston (KCMG 1966)
 (1968–1971)
 J R A Bottomley (1970–1972)
- (c) *Colonial Office (until 1 Aug 1966)*
- (i) Permanent under-secretary of state Sir Hilton Poynton (1959–1966)
- (ii) Deputy under-secretary of state Sir John Martin (1963–1965)
A N Galsworthy (1965–1966)
- (iii) Assistant under-secretary of state C G Eastwood (1954–1966)
W B L Monson (1951–1964)
A R Thomas (1952–1964)
A N Galsworthy (1957–1966)
Trafford Smith (1959–1966)
W I J Wallace (1962–1966)
J E Marnham (1964–1966)
- (d) *Commonwealth Relations Office, Commonwealth Office, 1 Aug 1966–17 Oct 1968*
- (i) Permanent under-secretary of state and head of Diplomatic Service, 1965–1968 Sir Saville Garner (1962–1968)
Sir Morrice James (1968)
- (ii) Deputy under-secretary of state Sir Algernon Rumbold (1958–1966)
Sir Arthur Snelling (1962–1968)
Sir Neil Pritchard (1963–1967)
Sir Morrice James (1966–1968)
A N Galsworthy (KCMG 1967)
(1966–1968)
- (iii) Assistant under-secretary of state G E B Shannon (1956–1966)
G W StJ Chadwick (1960–1966)
L B Walsh Atkins (1962–1966)
N D Watson (1965–1966)
J B Johnston (KCMG 1966)
(1966–1968)

J O Moreton (1966–1968)
 H P Hall (1966–1968)
 Trafford Smith (1966–1968)
 J R A Bottomley (1967–1968, then FCO)

(e) *Ministry of Overseas Development, to 12 Nov 1970*

- (i) Permanent under-secretary of state Sir Andrew Cohen (1964–1968)
 (Sir) Geoffrey Wilson (KCB 1969)
 (1968–1970)

(f) *Department of Economic Affairs to 6 Oct 1969*

- (i) Permanent under-secretary of state Sir Eric Roll (1964–1966)
 (Sir) D Allen (1966–1968)
 Sir W Nield (1968–1969)

Chiefs of Staff

Chief of defence staff Earl Mountbatten of Burma (1959–1965)
 Sir Richard Hull (1965–1967)
 Sir Charles Elworthy (1967–1971)

Chief of general staff Sir Richard Hull (1964–1965)
 Sir James Cassels (1965–1968)
 Sir Geoffrey Baker (1968–1971)

First sea lord and chief of naval staff Sir David Luce (1964–1966) resigned
 Sir Varyl Begg (1966–1968)
 Sir M Le Fanu (1968–1970)
 Sir Peter Hill-Norton (1970–1971)

Chief of air staff Sir Charles Elworthy (1964–1968)
 Sir John Grandy (1968–1971)

Select list of ambassadors and high commissioners

Ambassador in Washington Sir David Ormsby-Gore (Lord Harlech)
 (1961–1965)
 Sir Patrick Dean (1965–1969)
 J Freeman (1969–1971)

Ambassador to South Africa Sir Hugh Stephenson (1963–1966)
 Sir John Nicholls (1966–1967)
 Sir Arthur Snelling (1970–1972)

Permanent representative to the UN Lord Caradon (1964–1970)
 Sir Colin Crowe (1970–1973)

High commissioner, Aden and Protectorate of South Arabia	Sir Kennedy Trevaskis (1963–1965) Sir Richard Turnbull (1965–1967) Sir Humphrey Trevelyan (1967)
High commissioner, Australia	Sir Charles Johnston (1965–1971) Sir Morrice James (1971–1976)
High commissioner, Canada	Sir Henry Lintott (1963–1968) Sir Colin Crowe (1968–1970) (Sir) Peter Hayman (1970–1974)
High commissioner, India	Sir Paul Gore-Booth (1960–1965) J Freeman (1965–1968) Sir Morrice James (1968–1971) Sir Terence Garvey (1971–1973)
High commissioner, Kenya	M MacDonald (1965–1966) Sir Edward Peck (1966–1968) (Sir) Eric Norris (1968–1972)
High commissioner, Malaysia	Lord Head (1963–1966) Sir Michael Walker (1966–1971)
High commissioner, New Zealand	Sir Ian MacLennan (1964–1969) Sir Arthur Galsworthy (1969–1973)
High commissioner, Nigeria	Sir Francis Cumming-Bruce (1964–1967) Sir David Hunt (1967–1969) Sir Leslie Glass (1969–1974)
High commissioner, Singapore	J V Robb (1965–1968) (Sir) Arthur de la Mare (1968–1970) (Sir) Sam Falle (1970–1974)
High commissioner, Uganda	(Sir) David Hunt (1962–1965) R C C Hunt (1965–1967) D A Scott (1967–1970) R M K Slater (1970–1973)
British government representative, West Indies Associated States	C S Roberts (1967–1970) J E Marnham (1970–1972)

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CHAPTER 5

Europe

Document numbers 138–146

138 PREM 13/316, ff 2–5

12 Feb 1965

‘Haute politique: thoughts for the weekend’: minute by J O Wright to Mr Wilson on the importance of Europe

Your telephone conversation with the President about Vietnam, together with other indications, indicate that the nature of American Foreign Policy, as pursued by President Johnson, is likely to be very different (and less helpful to British interests) from that pursued by President Kennedy. You will recall that when Governor Harriman¹ visited you he made two main points:—

- (a) That the President, though reserving the major decisions for himself, would leave the day to day conduct of American Foreign Policy more and more to the professionals in the State Department.
- (b) That the United States did not wish to get embroiled too much in Africa and hoped that the European Powers would take the lead in that continent.

The fact we have to deal with is that the man who is at present at the head of the United States is basically not interested in Foreign Affairs. This means that he has no particular vision in his mind of the sort of world that Statesmen should be constructing. The conduct of American Foreign Policy is, therefore, likely to be left to the professionals in the State Department; and as is the way of professionals, they will react to the problems presented to them and carry on along well-trod paths; but they will not seek to master and direct events.

What this means is, I think, that we are in for a period of the reduction of American committedness to the world in general. President Johnson’s attitude will be: you get on with your problems and I’ll get on with mine. This is not isolationism, although it could lead to that: it is certainly, when compared to the American total commitment since the War, a form of neo-isolationism.

It is interesting, too, that there is a sort of comparable withdrawal of commitment on the part of the Soviet Union. This is for other reasons, chiefly the fact that the new leadership in the Soviet Union has not yet sorted itself out.

What this means is that the shapes and patterns of the world are still in a state of flux. Two Statesmen who have a vision of the world are Mau [sic] Tse Tung² and President de Gaulle, and paradoxically, they are men who, at the moment, have only a nuisance value, since they do not dispose of real power.

¹ Averell Harriman, US ambassador at large, 1965–1969.

² Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong), chairman of the People’s Republic of China, 1949–1976.

All this state of flux basically reflects two major factors:—

- (a) That there ain't goin' to be no nuclear War.
- (b) That the problems of international anarchy have moved to Asia and Africa.

The problem remains: what should Britain be doing in all this? The first thing, of course, is to get the economy on its feet. With a strong economy we can have a choice of policies; without a strong economy one can only react to events from outside. The second is to recognize that the nation, as a whole, has only two essential purposes overseas:—

- (a) To defend itself.
- (b) To earn its living.

Geographically, we exist in Europe; and increasingly, I suspect, industrially and commercially we shall have to earn our living in Europe. Our United Nations and Commonwealth Policies are enlightened and highly desirable. They deal with the problems of the future by helping to take the sting out of racial divisions of the world and by preventing the emergence of a North/South economic conflict, and they help to preserve the peace and they maintain our World Role. But they are not, I submit, absolutely essential to the twin tasks of the defence of the realm and the earning of the nation's living, though the Commonwealth can, of course, make up a considerable part of the second national objective.

Britain's position in the world rests, as it were, on a four-legged chair; the Commonwealth, the United Nations, the Atlantic Alliance and Europe. In present circumstances, and given the nature of the man at the White House, and the way the world is moving, it seems to me that the weak leg is, at the moment, Europe. Hence the very great importance of your forthcoming visits to Paris and Bonn.

The problem is what sort of Europe can Britain best live with. It is, of course, a Europe of the whole of Europe, not a Europe divided three ways between the Six and the Seven³ and the Soviet satellites.

How best can we work towards such a Europe? I submit that it is through promoting the idea of the reunification of Germany in peace and security. Germany will only be reunited when it ceases to present a danger to the nations which surround it to East and West. This certainly will mean a non-nuclear Germany; but a Germany of 70 million.

France is, at the moment, content with the Europe of the Six because General de Gaulle believes that he can control a divided Germany. But a divided Germany, with national ambitions unsatisfied, will always hanker after weapons of power to enable her to fulfil her ambitions. Real stability in Europe can only be achieved, far into the future, when Germany is reunited but non-nuclear. As we move towards this through detente with the Soviet Union, France will increasingly come to see the need for Britain to be closely associated with France in order to control the reunified Germany.

I suggest that this might be a thought of 'haute politique' which might intrigue the General.

The *bonne bouche* for the Germans is of course a non-nuclear reunification in

³ The seven countries of EFTA (established 1959): Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK.

peace and security through detente. A hint of this might be appropriate for your speech in Berlin: a discussion of it material for your talks in Bonn.

What I am suggesting, of course, is that the time is coming for a bit of British 'haute politique'. The object would be to modify the nature of the Six, to create the sort of Europe we could live with and be a part of, to de-fuse the German problem and to re-make Britain a key power in the jigsaw. At the end, the situation would be:—

An All-Europe des Patries, led by Britain and France
Germany reunified
Detente with the East.

139 CAB 129/128/2, C(67)33

16 Mar 1967

'The approach to Europe': joint Cabinet memorandum by Mr Wilson and Mr Brown. *Annex*

[Extract]

[The decision that Wilson and Brown should make exploratory visits to the capitals of the six member states of the EEC was taken after the sterling crisis of July 1966, the appointment of George Brown (a pro-European) as foreign secretary in Aug, and, more immediately, a meeting of the Cabinet and senior officials at Chequers on 22 Oct. 17 of the 23 Cabinet members were present at Chequers. The pro-Europeans were led by Brown, Stewart, Jenkins and (as a recent convert) Callaghan. Those against entry included Healey, Douglas Jay (Board of Trade), Barbara Castle, Greenwood, Fred Peart (Agriculture) and Richard Marsh (Power). It was Wilson who proposed a tour of the capitals. Sir William Armstrong from the Treasury opened the proceedings at Chequers with an assessment that entry could not be achieved by 1968, the working assumption in the papers prepared for the meeting. According to Armstrong, the UK economy needed more time to recover, and devaluation would be a precondition of entry. When officials departed the discussion, ministers disputed Armstrong's comments, depending on whether they were for or against entry. See Richard Crossman, *The diaries of a Cabinet minister Vol Two Lord president of the Council and leader of the House of Commons 1966-68* (London, 1976) pp 81-88; also, Ben Pimlott, *Harold Wilson* (London, 1992) pp 437-439.]

1. At our meeting on 9th March, 1967 (CC(67) 11th Conclusions, Minute 2), the Cabinet approved a procedure whereby the fullest consideration might be given to the conclusions we should draw as to development of our European policy, avoiding alike undue haste or delay. We agreed that we should first have a full and analytical discussion, starting before Easter, of the prospects for British membership of the European Economic Community (EEC), as these appeared in the light of the discussions which we had just completed with the Heads of Government of the six member countries of the EEC; and on which we would circulate a factual report. After Easter we would complete that first stage of discussion before seeking to draw conclusions, for which purpose we should need further papers setting out the alternative courses open to us, both European and otherwise, and discussing their relative merits.

2. This memorandum is circulated as the basis for the first part of our discussions: it is a factual summary of our talks in the capitals of the Six. We are circulating, as an Annex to it, the detailed records of these talks.¹ The report starts from the basis for the talks which the Cabinet agreed in their last full discussions on

¹ Only an extract from the record of the talks in Paris is reproduced here.

European policy in October and November (CC(66) 55th Conclusions, Minute 2). This basis was that the object of our talks was 'for the purpose of establishing whether it appears likely that essential British and Commonwealth interests could be safeguarded if Britain were to accept the Treaty of Rome and join the EEC': and with this in view, that we should focus our discussions in the main upon the areas where the Cabinet foresaw the most difficulty, namely the effects of the Common Agricultural Policy on our cost of living, on the pattern of British agriculture, on Commonwealth trade and agricultural products and on our balance of payments; the other problems of Commonwealth trade; the effects of Community policy on capital movements, and on regional economic policies.

3. In all our discussions in the capitals of the Community we have stressed that it was the intention and firm determination of Her Majesty's Government to enter the European Economic Community if this could be done on terms which would safeguard essential British and Commonwealth interests. We have said that we would be prepared to accept the Treaty of Rome, subject to the necessary adjustments consequent upon the accession of a new member and provided that we received satisfaction on the points about which we see difficulty. We have explained to the Six and sought their views on the principal difficulties which we expected to arise, in the fields of agriculture, capital movements, regional policies, and Commonwealth trade; and we have made it clear to them that there were other questions which would need to be settled in any negotiation but which were not of the same order of difficulty as those upon which we were concentrating. We made it clear that we should need further consultation with Commonwealth countries. We also stated that, although we were not speaking on behalf of our EFTA partners, we were pledged to remain in the closest consultation with them, and it was our belief that if we applied for membership ourselves, many of them would wish to apply for membership of or association with the Community.

4. We emphasised on all our visits that we did not regard our interest in membership of the Community as making a successful outcome to the Kennedy Round any less important. We stressed that the deadline for the conclusion of the negotiations was coming fast upon us. We said where necessary, that we believed our own offers in the Kennedy Round [on GATT] to have been generous by comparison with those of the Community, and that we hoped that the Community would be able to see its way to improving its offers in order that we should not be forced to implement our withdrawals.

5. In paragraphs 6–11 below we set out briefly our general impressions of the attitudes of individual Community countries towards British accession, as they emerged during the course of our talks. In paragraphs 12–22 we summarise what we learnt about the possibility of dealing satisfactorily with the main difficulties we saw as hindering our entry. In paragraphs 23–34 we outline the results of our talks with the Community on the main points which proved to be of particular interest or concern to them.

Our reception in the six capitals

6. In *Rome*, we made a very good start, given that exploratory talks were a new experience, the Italian Government insecure, and the Paris visit next in line. Italian Ministers said that they were entirely favourable towards British entry to the Community, and would do all they could to facilitate it. They said that they believed

many of the problems that had been discussed were easy to solve, others were more difficult, but none were insuperable. The Italians thought, however, that any negotiations which we undertook would have to be fairly short and should concentrate on a relatively small number of major issues. But there was some disposition on the part of the Italian Ministers to think that further 'pre-negotiations' would be desirable in order to pave the way for a rapid negotiation.

7. We believe that in *Paris*, we convinced General de Gaulle and his Ministers not only that we were entirely serious in our determination to enter the Community, but also that the stock French excuses for obstructing our entry would no longer serve their purpose. There is indeed some evidence that French Ministers may have been somewhat disconcerted by the determination and novelty of our approach. There has been some evidence of this in that, whilst General de Gaulle did not of course commit himself, he recognised that a considerable change had taken place in British thinking over the last few years, and, in his own words, that Britain was now ready to 'moor herself alongside the Continent'. Changing the ground he took up in 1963, he said that the question of British entry raised the problem of a change in the fundamental character of the Community. He suggested, as possible alternatives to British membership, given that that seemed difficult if not impossible, either a form of association or 'something new and different'. We rejected both of these suggestions on the grounds that only membership of the Community seemed to provide a sufficient basis for the wider political unity inside Europe and between Europe and the outside world which we felt must be the aim.

8. In *Brussels*, Belgian Ministers reaffirmed their full support for British entry into the Community. Britain needed Europe and Europe needed Britain. They also favoured the admission of other EFTA countries. Their attitude was helpful throughout, though slightly complicated by their wish to promote ideas for European co-operation in the political and technological fields at the proposed decennial celebrations in Rome in April 1967. We also had a useful discussion with the Commission and the EEC in which Dr. Mansholt² supported, with figures, our claim for adjustment of the financial regulations of the Common Agricultural Policy.

9. The visit to *Bonn* was the subject of a great deal of discouraging Press comment, both before and afterwards. This arose less from what was said in the discussions on Community membership than from some of the circumstances surrounding the trip and the juxtaposition of such other issues as the Kosygin visit, the German attitude on non-proliferation and the difficulties of the offset negotiations. We had never expected that, given the importance which the present German Government attaches to mending Franco-German fences, they would be prepared to exert any intense pressure on the French in favour of British membership. But they reaffirmed that, for political and economic reasons very similar to our own (they too have over 50 million people earning a living by exports), they were in favour of Community membership for Britain and other EFTA countries, and the German Chancellor undertook that they would certainly do what they could to facilitate British entry and hoped there would be a positive outcome to our present initiative. There have been some suggestions since (at second-hand) that the Germans prefer to think in terms of an extended period of pre-negotiation before Britain should apply for membership of the Community. Certainly, in Bonn, they

² Dr Sicco Mansholt (Netherlands), vice-president of the European Commission since 1968.

suggested further bilateral discussions, but there was no suggestion that these should take any considerable length of time.

10. At *The Hague* we found the expected enthusiasm for British entry. The Dutch have always been the principal supporters of British entry within the Community, and they showed that there had been no change in their position. They recognised the difficulties that various aspects of Community policy raised for us but firmly advocated that in the interests of maintaining momentum and so as to give the least possible opportunity to the French for delaying devices we should make an early application to join the Community and that it should be as simple as possible. Their advice was that the application should be based on an acceptance of the Treaty of Rome and, to the greatest extent possible, should envisage only transitional periods to overcome the difficulties that we foresaw. There would then, in their view, be no basis on which to reject or delay our application: but they did not deny it was another question if the General did make it a choice between Britain and the Community.

11. In *Luxembourg*, their Ministers said that their positive attitude towards British membership of the Community had not changed over the years since the question was first discussed. They made a number of references, on social occasions, to the role which Britain had played during the war and said they believed that the Community could only stand to gain, both economically and politically, from Britain's entry. Their advice was very similar to that of the Dutch, that we should go ahead with a view to early negotiations for membership; and they did not favour any further exploration of the position, bilateral or otherwise. They too were in favour of our making a simple application. In Luxembourg we also had the opportunity of an informal meeting with the acting President and members of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community who suggested that although there were certainly problems connected with British entry into the ECSC, none of these seemed likely to be incapable of being overcome within the framework of the Treaty of Paris, which, in their experience, had proved to be a highly flexible instrument.

Main problems accession would raise for the United Kingdom

12. We now turn to the individual subjects that we discussed at varying lengths in each of the capitals of the Six. First, our hosts wished to hear us expound our problems, and what solutions we wanted to see for them: indeed, the latter was the best way to elicit advice as to what we could hope for. In one order or another, the four main problems—agriculture, capital movements, Commonwealth trade and regional policy—were the standard subjects of discussion in all capitals. We summarise below the substance of our reiterated statements on these subjects, bringing out comments of particular interest to the Six as these were made in one capital or another. Since our discussions in each capital of the Six were closely and accurately reported to the other capitals both by our hosts and through our own diplomatic channels, the discussions acquired a continuity and a sense of movement, of increasing clarification of the issues, which it is difficult to bring out in the necessarily subject-by-subject summary which follows.

Common agricultural policy

13. In all six capitals we stressed the difficulties that would arise for the United Kingdom if we were required to accept the Common Agricultural Policy as it stood, with no material changes, *e.g.*, in price levels or in the financing arrangements. We

described these difficulties under four principal headings: effects on the cost of living in the United Kingdom; on our farmers and on the pattern of agricultural production in the United Kingdom; on Commonwealth trade; and on our balance of payments. We stressed throughout that an adequate transitional period would be needed to deal with the cost-of-living problem; that we should need both a transitional period and some financial assistance to deal with the disturbance to the balance of our agriculture, and that in our view the changes in the pattern of production likely to take place might result in an irrational use of agricultural resources in the United Kingdom; that there were difficult problems arising on Commonwealth trade, especially those for Commonwealth sugar producers and New Zealand; we emphasised that for New Zealand a transitional period would not be enough unless it were for a generation, *e.g.*, that arrangements would need to be if not permanent, at least equal in effect to a permanent change; and we stressed the importance of the balance of payments problem and the inequitable burden which would be placed on the United Kingdom if, as we calculated, we would be required to pay as under the present arrangements something over 35 per cent of the cost of financing the Community's agricultural policy and about twice what any other country would have to pay.

14. The French commented that the areas in which we were asking for changes were precisely those sensitive areas in which the Community had had such difficulty in reaching agreement. Both they and the Dutch thought it unrealistic to expect that price levels within the Community would be reduced; and we knew already that the Germans are attached to the present level of prices. But the point was frequently made to us that world prices might be expected to rise, so that the adverse consequences which we expect from joining the Community would to that extent be diminished. There was general agreement that the balance of payments burden falling on the United Kingdom as a result of accepting the Common Agricultural Policy would be inequitable. The Dutch commented that opinion among all six States of the Community ranged from the view that effects would be 'somewhat excessive' to the view that they would be 'very excessive'.

15. We found that the calculations made by Commission and German experts were very similar to our own, at least as regards the order of magnitude of the balance of payments burden which we should be assuming and on the probable effect on the retail cost of food and thus on the cost of living. The French, however, thought we might have under-estimated the amounts we should recoup in subsidies for market support and export purposes; and fainter echoes of this were raised but not pursued in Rome and Bonn.

16. The Italians asked us whether the agricultural problems could be left until 1969, when the Community had to renegotiate the financial regulations. We said that if mutual understanding could be reached as to how matters could be dealt with it might be possible to leave certain agricultural questions for later settlement; but it would be most imprudent, both from the point of view of the United Kingdom and that of the Community, to leave fundamental issues in doubt. The Dutch were much firmer on the desirability of leaving agricultural problems until the renegotiation in 1969. They said they thought that most of our problems could be overcome by adequate transitional periods. They agreed that the effect on the cost of living could be serious if changes had to be made all at once, but pointed out that price adjustments could take place every year under Common Market regulations and that

might make the problem easier to deal with. They asserted that from 1962–66 retail food prices in the United Kingdom had risen by 15.1 per cent and they thought a 3 per cent rise in the cost of living, suitably spread, should occasion no great difficulty. They pointed out also, on the balance of payments problem, that in May 1966, the Five had agreed that the principle of equitable sharing of burdens within the Community should apply and that the Germans had negotiated a ceiling on their total contribution to the Common Agricultural Policy. Although they thought that we had a fair point in arguing that the effect upon our balance of payments would be inequitable they were firm in reminding us that the only point agreed for application from 1969 onwards was that levies should be transferred to the Community for Community (not only agricultural) purposes. And they thought that if we were in the Community by 1969 we should be able to play a major role in determining the new financial arrangements applicable to agriculture.

17. Luxembourg Ministers said that although they realised the difficulties which the Common Agricultural Policy would raise for the United Kingdom, they did not think it was possible to overturn what they called the ‘basic philosophy’ of the policy. They did, however, suggest both that price levels would be open to negotiation once we were in the Community, and that the Community’s policy provided for payments out of the Agricultural Fund to assist members in adapting themselves to the common policies that they would be required to follow.

18. There was little comment from Community Ministers about Commonwealth problems falling within the agricultural sector. We did not pursue this, since the main commodity problems, notably cereals, could not be discussed without trenching on matters now in the final stage of negotiation in the Kennedy Round, where our interests and those of the Commonwealth are sharply opposed. In all capitals we pointed out the importance of the Common Sugar Agreement and the need to overcome the problems our entry would raise; this was nowhere contested. Most of the discussion was therefore on the most difficult question, *i.e.*, New Zealand. There was general acceptance of the view that something special needed to be done for New Zealand, and the following comments are all subject to that. The Belgians seemed to have some doubts whether a permanent arrangement was desirable or possible. The Germans did not comment on our proposal that the New Zealand problem might be dealt with, *e.g.*, by a Morocco-type protocol, by association, or by a special quota arrangement providing for access to the Community for New Zealand products, beyond enquiring whether we thought that all New Zealand produce needed to be covered in this way—the implication was that they thought it would be possible to deal in one of these ways with at least some commodities. The Dutch said that for their part any one of the types of solution which had been mentioned was acceptable to the Netherlands Government, though they seemed to prefer that we should not insist upon making a permanent arrangement. It is our strong impression that if British entry were conceded, a reasonable settlement for New Zealand would follow so long as we insisted on it.

Capital movements

19. We have throughout expressed our disquiet at the possibility that freedom of portfolio investment within the Community might result in British investment being channelled through the Community to other highly developed areas such as the United States, as an organised traffic. We thought that it was in the interests neither

of Britain nor the rest of the Community that much needed Community capital should be able to move overseas without restriction. We said that we would wish for a transitional period to deal with direct investment, but that the problem on portfolio investment was more serious and would need a longer transitional period pending some new Community arrangements to control outward flows of investment.

20. The Italians seemed receptive to the idea that British (and other Community) capital should not move freely to highly developed countries. The French did not comment. The Belgians agreed that portfolio investment presented a more difficult problem than direct investment, but Belgian experience had not so far assessed the risk as a particularly serious one. The Germans made no significant comment probably because the new Government had not had time to look into this specialised subject. The Dutch—much the most expert on this—agreed that if a serious outflow of capital from the Community—a new phenomenon—were to appear some new Community arrangement would be necessary; in the meantime, they thought that if there were a significant effect on the British balance of payments resulting from traffic of this kind, then we would be entitled to operate the safeguard clause provided in Article 70 (2) of the Treaty. They advised us not to make it a condition of our entry to deal with this question beforehand. The Luxembourgers also recommended us to consider Article 70(2) of the Treaty as the means of overcoming our difficulties in this field.

Regional policies

21. We nowhere found any disposition to question the acceptability of the regional policies which we at present operate. The Dutch specifically declared that they would present no difficulty; the Italians have also confirmed to us that in their view there is nothing in our policies, either positive incentives or negative controls such as the ability to refuse industrial development certificates, which would be incompatible with the Treaty or subsequent policies. The Belgians gave a practical example just before our visit of how lax the Commission's control over politically sensitive schemes is bound to be by announcing the Commission's approval of a new scheme favouring both a needy area with one language and a less deserving area with a different language. Our impression is that provided schemes are non-discriminatory and do not excessively and directly distort competition as between members of the Community, there is little to be feared.

Commonwealth issues

22. In addition to the Commonwealth problems, dealt with under the heading of agriculture, we said that in the last round of negotiations, those conducted by the previous Administration in 1961–63, a variety of arrangements had been provisionally agreed upon or envisaged, which would have provided the offer of association for some Commonwealth countries (in particular those in Africa and the Caribbean) and different opportunities for others (in particular comprehensive trade agreements for certain Asian countries). We said that we assumed that these arrangements to the extent that they were still relevant and useful, could be carried over and the problem of African, Caribbean and Asian Commonwealth countries dealt with in this fashion. We have heard nothing which would suggest that the Community countries would see any difficulty in maintaining arrangements of this kind: they probably feel that, sooner or later, if they do not negotiate such

arrangements as concomitants of our entry, they will have to do so on the application of the same Commonwealth countries motivated by reasons of commercial self-interest—Nigeria³ has set a precedent which East Africa is following.

Problems British accession raises for the Community

23. A number of other questions have been discussed besides the principal ones listed above. Some of these were raised in order to deal in advance with the known preoccupations of Community Ministers; some were raised specifically by them. It is in this field of Community reactions to our approach that our discussions have been most informative.

The British economic position, the international role of sterling and the sterling balances

24. This question has been a prominent feature in the discussions. It first arose as a major issue in Paris, though we had already discussed it briefly in Rome. Throughout our discussions with the Community we emphasised the favourable development of our balance of payments, our intention to maintain a strong balance, and our belief that the sterling balances would not and should not become a drag on the Community if we entered. In Paris we made a long and frank exposé on the position of sterling and offered to discuss constructively any anxieties they might have. The discussion elicited from the French the useful statement that the French believed the devaluation of sterling would have been of no benefit to Britain and would probably have damaged France also; otherwise MM. Pompidou and Couve de Murville⁴ were content to point to the extent of our total debts and to sterling's world wide role as a trading and reserve currency as an example of the difficulties which the import of extra-European interests would bring into the Community.

25. We made clear in all capitals that the sterling balances were not instruments of prestige, but bankers' obligations which had to be covered by assets, and that ours were so covered. We stood ready to discuss these obligations with other countries before entry into the Community and, if that was what they wished, to discuss with them such possibilities as funding balances against specific assets, *e.g.*, as one aspect of the wider question of the extent to which the EEC might develop a distinctive monetary policy of its own. This is of course an esoteric subject, and it was not until our Dutch friends (who are also the most expert in these matters) for the first time responded to our statements that we were able to separate out the two main aspects of this question.

26. The Dutch, no doubt partly for their own reassurance and partly in order that they could use this reassurance with other members of the Community in our favour, suggested that the Community should be protected from any obligation to 'bail us out' if difficulties arose from sterling's role as an international currency, and were not related to our own balance of payments. They clearly agreed with us that disequilibria involving any major Western currency should be dealt with in the framework of wider international monetary arrangements notably the IMF and the Basle arrangements rather than by the Community as such, whose role under Article 108 should be limited to assistance related to any strains arising from the need to

³ See 260, note 3.

⁴ Georges Pompidou, French prime minister and Maurice Couve de Murville, French foreign minister.

comply with policy requirements of the Community. We confirmed that we did not regard Article 108 of the Treaty of Rome as obliging the Community as such to underwrite difficulties that we might encounter in consequence of the world wide uses of sterling, and we would consider, if they wished, giving them a derogation to this effect. The Dutch said that this would cut the ground from under what the French were saying on the risks sterling involved for the Community. The Luxembourgers also welcomed our statement that it would not seem appropriate to invoke Article 108 in the event of difficulties arising from the sterling balances and the wider international role of sterling. They thought that it might be desirable for a document interpreting Article 108 in this sense to be worked out during the course of any eventual negotiations for British entry.

27. We cannot claim that we have heard the last of this difficulty as a French objection to membership. But we are convinced that we have gone a long way to reassure those who are prepared to be reassured on this point. The other main doubt which is held with varying degrees of clarity in all six capitals arises from the fact that the strength of sterling depends on the strength of the British economy. We recited the impressive figures of recovery of our balance of payments; but some doubts clearly remain.

Change in the nature of the Community

28. The French placed considerable emphasis on the change which, they claimed, would take place in the nature of the Community if the United Kingdom and other EFTA countries were admitted to membership. Clearly, what the French are worried about is that, if we are admitted, and if other countries come in too, then they can no longer be in so strong a position within the Community and can no longer expect the Community to serve as a backing for French policy. This is not, of course, the argument the French use with us, or with the Five who relayed it to us.

29. Whilst the same doubts about the results of extending the Community were expressed to us by all the other members of the Six, with varying degrees of seriousness, their concern is very different from that of the French. It is that if the Community is expanded to include 10 or 12 members, it may be more difficult to develop the Community further. Moreover, there is a genuine fear, shared also by the Commission, that a Community expanded in this way would, unless majority voting and constructive central institutions were preserved, be reduced to an ineffective organisation incapable of making greater positive progress than for instance the present OECD. We said that it was not our wish or intention to change or to dilute the nature of the Community any more than was inevitable upon the accession of other members. Some change there would inevitably be, but the alternative to change was stagnation, and, in any case, the Treaty itself provided for the accession of new members. Nor was the wider Community in fact likely to be more difficult to operate, either mathematically or politically, than the present one had proved to be. In an analogy based upon the concept of the Community's having built a railway line towards its objective, we suggested that what we were trying to do was not only to put additional coaches on the train, but also to put a more powerful engine on it; it was no part of our plan to rip up the track or change the signals.

30. Despite the doubts expressed, all the members of the Community, with the exception of France, said not only that it was their firm wish to see Britain in the Community, but that they wanted to admit other members as well. Whilst there can

be little doubt that we reassured the members of the Community as to our own intentions to help in making a success of the Community, their own experience with the intransigence of France makes the Five vulnerable to suggestions that with the Community enlarged to 10 or 12 or more the problems will be at least twice as great. The French will presumably continue to play on these fears of the Five for their own reasons; and the Five will be looking for assurances that in an expanded Community, not only will we be concerned to play our full role in operating the institutions of the Community, but also that the enlarged Community itself will not be too cumbersome to function effectively.

Institutions

31. In the light of the foregoing discussions, which were somewhat delicate as we were speaking neither as members nor as candidates for membership, we were non-committal about our attitude to majority voting within the Community (in the sense that we said we could accept majority voting to the same extent as the other members), and on the future role of the European Parliament—a point to which the Dutch, who believe in greater democratic Parliamentary control within the Community itself, attach importance. It was a weakness of our exploratory position that we had to base ourselves on saying that we would be concerned, within an expanded Community, to ensure the effectiveness of the Community's operation, when it was clear that the Five are looking to us, *inter alia*, to make the Community live and work again, while France is not.

Technology

32. One of the most impressive cards which we had available during the visits to the Community is the advanced technological development of the United Kingdom by comparison with development in Europe, the relatively large amounts of expenditure on research and development in the United Kingdom, and the widespread concern in Europe about the technological gap between Europe and the United States. We have, with, we believe, very considerable effect, made clear that greater technological collaboration can only be expected to take place if the economic and market base is provided in the shape of an expanded economic Community. We have said that we thought it necessary to achieve a strong and independent industrial structure in Europe. This is one of the most telling ways of saying that Europe will not be big enough without us. Only in Paris did there seem to be any disposition on the part of Community Ministers to argue that technological collaboration could be pursued on a continuing bilateral basis, whether or not we belonged to the Community. We emphasised that although it was certainly true that in the field of military co-operation the impulse and orders were given by Governments, in the wider field of civil technological collaboration, projects could not be imposed by Governments; and that it would be a mistake to assume too lightly that technological collaboration with Europe could continue unimpaired if we remained outside the Community.

ECSC, EURATOM and non-proliferation

33. We have said that, if the United Kingdom joined the EEC she would wish at the same time to join EURATOM and the ECSC, if the separate Communities were still in existence at the time that we came to join. If in the meantime the Communities had

merged then, of course, we would wish to join the one, merged Community. We would want to give added impetus to what might be regarded as the technological component of an expanded Community and thought that we were in a good position to do so. These assurances were in themselves well received, but a shadow was cast over the later discussions by the reactions of Community members—in particular Germany—and the EURATOM Commission to the draft Non-Proliferation Treaty. We have done our best to remove anxieties arising on this score; and, as the Cabinet will know, discussions have taken place with both the Federal German Government and the EURATOM Commission on this subject outside the framework of our exploratory discussion concerning membership of the Community. But it would certainly be premature to say that doubts had been set at rest.

Political unity

34. In all the capitals we were asked, in one form or another, for our views on the political development of Europe. We were able to reply that for many years now we had made clear our wish to participate to the full in any discussions with that objective, that this was still our position. In confirmation of this, we also made it clear that we would regard it as tragic if any moves which might be taken by the Six in the near future to bring about closer political co-operation, *e.g.*, at the proposed Rome Summit, should serve as a pretext for deferring consideration of the possibility of our own membership, and we were given assurances that this would not be allowed to happen. These replies were well received, as evidence that our interest in the Community was not solely a calculation of economic and technological advantage, but also a political realisation of the necessity for a Europe strong enough and united enough to speak with the Super Powers on equal terms. But we made it clear that we were concerned that an enlarged Community should both preserve close relations with other North Atlantic Powers and play its full role in the relaxation of East-West tensions; that is to say, that our concept of European unity was designed both to break down the present barriers between Eastern and Western Europe and to result in Europe exerting a more powerful and effective influence in world affairs. In this connection, we would draw attention to the concluding section of the opening statement made by the Prime Minister in Paris to General de Gaulle (see [pp 14–15] of the Annex).

35. We would conclude this survey of our discussions with what are perhaps the three major impressions of a general character it has left with us, and which are perhaps not sufficiently brought out by the foregoing account of our discussions on specific subjects. First, there can be no doubt whatsoever that, with the exception of the French, all members of the Community retain a strong interest in and desire for British membership. But it would be unrealistic to imagine that any of the present members could be prepared to risk the break-up, or at best the further frustration of the existing Community, in an effort to overbear French opposition to British membership. Some members would be prepared to exert more pressure than others on France; but certainly none would be prepared to confront the General, with all the risks that entails.

36. Second, as the discussion of our major difficulties has continued, with a certain continuity as noted in paragraph 12 from capital to capital, the areas of real difficulty have become increasingly clear and have been substantially reduced; the same is true of the matters which the Six said were of concern to them. It was not possible without crossing the no-man's land between exploration and negotiation to

reduce to specific terms the possibilities of agreement on the items of major difficulty for us; but we have no doubt that acceptable solutions to our problems could rapidly be negotiated if France did not act as saboteur.

37. Third, one of our strongest impressions is of the commanding position which is waiting for us in the Community if the difficulties which at present stand in the way of our membership can be overcome. In our discussions we had a generally warm response to what we have said about the potentialities for good of an enlarged European Community, potentialities which are however beyond the separate capacities of the European countries or organisations as they exist to-day. The exploratory character of our mission, however, naturally obliged us to respond very cautiously to the sincerity of the welcome which so clearly awaits us if we can get in. The fact is that there is, within most of the Community, a clear recognition that, with the entry of Britain, they will be taking into partnership a major European Power, with the economic and technological capacity, the political will and the kind of associates to ensure that the enlarged Community will at last have the strength and the balance to play the role in the world which the importance of Europe warrants.

Annex to 139: Extract from the record of a meeting between Mr Wilson and the foreign secretary and General de Gaulle and the French foreign minister at the Elysée Palace, 24 Jan 1967

... France and Britain's role in Europe

The Prime Minister apologised for the length of his opening remarks but said that he felt it had been the President's wish that there should be this full explanation of the British position. (*General de Gaulle* indicated assent.) What he was suggesting was that the whole issue could not just be considered in bilateral terms or in terms of the detailed economic issues that dominated the discussions four or five years ago. There were far bigger issues at stake. The essential one was whether we could hope to build up Europe, as the General and he understood Europe, with the purpose of breaking down tension between East and West. Both France and Britain had a vital role to play—a slightly different role perhaps—but they had to be able to play it together. France and Britain had very special relations not only with their Western European partners but—unlike some of those in the West—with the Soviet Union. The French Government had had close contact with the Soviet leadership and so had Her Majesty's Government. The General and he knew what problems had to be solved if the Soviet Union was to have the reassurance she needed if the wider European unity that they both believed in was to be achieved. General de Gaulle's two meetings with Mr. Kosygin in the previous year in Moscow and in Paris; the Prime Minister's own two meetings in Moscow; and M. Couve de Murville's talks and those of Mr. George Brown with the Soviet Government had also, he thought, underlined for both of them what this essential reassurance must be, and he had no doubt that Mr. Kosygin's forthcoming visit to London would again re-emphasise this. The President and he were both committed to doing everything they could to make a reality of the unity of Western Europe. But they both knew that this would be an empty achievement unless it led first to an easing of tension and then to an honourable and lasting settlement of the outstanding problems that still divided Europe, West from East. This was something for which they had both hoped and striven for 20 years; and

in the case of General de Gaulle, even longer than that. As members of a united European Community they both should be better able to achieve it. But he did not think that this would be possible unless together they pulled their full weight, in the most complete sense of that word, and did so not only within the alliance but also more generally. Europe had an even wider role to play in the world at large; but she would not be able to play it unless she were powerful—and that meant economically powerful. The task of the great European Powers—of France and of Britain—was not to be mere messenger boys between the two Great Powers. They had a bigger role to play—and other nations wished them to play it—than merely waiting in the ante-rooms while the two Great Powers settled everything direct between themselves. That was why France and Britain had to make effective their enormous potential industrial strength by giving that strength substance to operate on a European and not a national scale, or series of national states. Only if France and Britain did this could they exert all that went with industrial strength and independence in terms of Europe's influence in world affairs.

General de Gaulle thanked the Prime Minister for his statement. He had been greatly interested by it and by the way in which it was expressed. First, he was particularly struck by the great difference in what the Prime Minister was now saying about Europe in general and the Common Market in particular, compared with the British attitude throughout the years since he had had the honour of directing French affairs. He remembered Britain's refusal to participate when the Common Market was being negotiated. He recalled Mr. Macmillan⁵ speaking about 'economic warfare' and making clear his hope that the Common Market would fail. He remembered Mr. Heath involving the European Governments in interminable negotiations in Brussels which had inevitably produced no result. He also remembered the Prime Minister's own statements before he came to office and, indeed, thereafter. He had understood that the British Government were not then favourable to the possibility of economic integration within the Common Market. But now he took note of the very substantial change in the British position and he had listened with great attention to the Prime Minister's exposition of it. He took note with interest of the great difference between the past and what was apparently the present British attitude.

General de Gaulle said that he had also been greatly struck by what the Prime Minister had said—and had implied—in his remarks about independence. For many years—and particularly during the war, when he supposed that it had been an inescapable fact of life—he had observed that Britain appeared to wish at almost any cost to maintain a special role with the United States. This had even been true in regard to Britain's relations with continental Europe; Sir Winston Churchill had expounded the doctrine of European unity but had made it clear that such unity was all right for the Europeans but not for the British. The British attitude had been similar within NATO and particularly in the way that the British nuclear force had been integrated with the nuclear force of NATO—which meant in effect the nuclear force of the United States. For many years this had apparently been a clearly defined British policy and general attitude. Now, as he understood it, the Prime Minister was saying that things had changed and that Britain sought independence in the same way as France sought it and was beginning to practise it; and that this was especially true in the economic field, in regard to industrial development and in the field of

⁵ Harold Macmillan, prime minister, 1957–1963.

capital investment. He had not found the Prime Minister too explicit about the future role he envisaged for the pound sterling, though Mr. Wilson had expressed full confidence in the strength of sterling. France paid tribute to the great effort made by the British Government to restore the nation's economic strength during the past two years. But they were not clear about the British attitude in the financial field. British policy towards sterling still seemed to be very closely linked with United States financial policy. Nevertheless he wished to re-emphasise the great difference that struck him in the Prime Minister's remarks about Britain's attitude towards her own independence; and he warmly welcomed this.

Expansion of the Community

General de Gaulle said that during the years since the concept of European unity had been developed, and particularly since the signature of the Rome Treaty, certain realities, as the Prime Minister would know, had been created. The Treaty itself was not such a reality—it was simply a Treaty. But its application had created certain realities, difficult as that application had been, both in the industrial and economic field and also—and here the difficulties had been very great indeed—in agriculture. But the consequence of this was that a method of working had developed between the six partners in the Common Market which took account of their different economic interests and sought to achieve a process of mutual compensation in respect of those interests. This was a very slow process; it was not yet finished and might never be finished. But the machinery had begun to work.

Of course this was the situation as it had developed at present amongst the Six and without taking account of the possibility of British entry. Such entry was clearly a matter of major significance, both economically and industrially; its consequence would be profoundly to change, if not the text of the Treaty, certainly its practical application—as indeed the Prime Minister had himself recognised. Moreover, if Britain joined the EEC then clearly others would wish to do the same, particularly members of EFTA. In consequence, it would no longer be a community of six countries but of anything between seven and 13; and its whole nature would be quite different. Naturally, the Prime Minister realised this and he (*General de Gaulle*) was not suggesting that it was an inconceivable proposition, indeed he did not regard it as such. But it would be very difficult.

General de Gaulle said that this disposed of the problems that British membership would pose for the machinery and the operation of the EEC. But in addition there were a number of practical problems. It was difficult fully to define these at present and would in any case take too much time. Clearly agriculture was one; and coal and steel would be others, since the Community wished to control these too. But perhaps the most important of all would be the financial problem and the problem of currencies. It was undeniable that these were common problems, and that the difficulties of sterling had an impact on the currencies of all European countries. They all hoped that sterling was becoming stronger and welcomed the Prime Minister's statement to that effect. But it could not be denied that sterling was in a different international position from the other European currencies in that it was a reserve currency and, because of the vast size of the sterling balances, presented certain very special difficulties which placed it in a different situation from the currencies of the Six. This was a serious problem; and there were others as well.

General de Gaulle said that the Prime Minister had explained British intentions. He had listened with the utmost consideration and respect. France had no doubt of the great economic and technological capacity of Britain; and it seemed clear that, whether or not Britain joined the Common Market, France and Britain could do much useful work together in a number of fields. The Prime Minister had referred to aircraft: there was also co-operation in the field of space—Britain and France were co-operating with Germany and Italy to produce a space rocket which they hoped would be of considerable value in the future. They recognised that Britain was extremely advanced in the computer field; and in this and in other fields there was great scope for co-operation between France and Britain and also between the two of them and Germany and Italy.

In regard to *East/West relations*, General de Gaulle agreed that the French and British approaches were very similar and that they were in effect working in parallel—though he hoped that he might be allowed to say that France had played the hand rather more independently of the United States, for example, in regard to such problems as Vietnam, than Britain had seen fit to do. But there was no real disagreement between them on the East/West problem, a subject of capital importance. However, whether or not they achieved economic unity within Western Europe, nothing could be expected to come of this unless they could achieve the complete unity of Europe and the total independence that he sought from the United States. He wished to make it clear that, in speaking in this way of the United States, he did not do so in any spirit of hostility or animosity towards the Americans. But Europe could only achieve something effective in the world if the European countries were completely independent themselves.

General de Gaulle said that he would reflect very carefully over what the Prime Minister had said, over what he had heard about Mr. Wilson's and Mr. Brown's talks in Rome—and the account of those that the French Government had received from the British Government—and he would look forward to hearing from the Prime Minister in due course how his talks in the other capitals of the Six had gone. The French Government would then wish to reflect very carefully on the outcome and to weigh the various considerations involved.

Defence questions

The Prime Minister thanked the General and suggested that he should comment on some of the main issues raised. On certain of them, he thought that complete understanding could be reached; on others there were perhaps at present some misunderstandings which he would try to dispel. General de Gaulle had referred to the difference in the British attitude three to four years ago and that which now prevailed. He himself had not of course been involved in the previous discussions but he had the clear impression that the Nassau Agreement⁶—perhaps less because of its content than as a symbol—had had a serious effect on Anglo-French relations. The

⁶ John F Kennedy (US president) and Macmillan reached agreement at Nassau in the Bahamas in Dec 1962 that the US would supply, as an alternative to Skybolt (an air-to-ground missile abandoned by the US on the grounds of cost) Polaris missiles for Royal Navy submarines. Having already decided, again on grounds of cost, not to proceed with its own Blue Streak missile, Britain was also reluctant to explore a European alternative. The Nassau agreement angered de Gaulle who cited it as proof the UK was not yet sufficiently Europe-minded to join the Common Market. Four weeks later the French president vetoed Britain's first application to join the EEC.

Foreign Secretary and he had then been in Opposition and had attacked and voted against the Nassau Agreement; and they had declared their intention to re-negotiate or 'de-negotiate' it on coming to power. In practice, so far as Nassau was concerned, within a month of coming to power they had killed the MLF project which had appeared at that time the main object of United States policy in NATO; the multilateral fleet had been torpedoed by a British finger pressing the switch. We had then put forward our proposal for an Atlantic Nuclear Force. But increasingly from that time onwards we had been seeking a solution within NATO, but equally of a nature that would not imperil the prospects of understanding with the East. The British Government had consistently worked for an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It was neither a secret nor a surprise for him to say that there were big differences between France and Britain in their approach to NATO, just as there were between France and some of her partners in the Six on the same subject. *General de Gaulle* agreed.

But *the Prime Minister* said that we should examine more closely this argument about defence and the nuclear force. It was true that, because of the Nassau Agreement, British nuclear forces took the form of Polaris submarines. His party had criticised that Agreement. But the Agreement existed and it had been impossible to put the clock back and start again, for example with a Blue Streak missile. What mattered was that once we had the Polaris missiles, as we should do shortly, they would belong to us and there would be no question of dependence on the United States for this particular form of nuclear power. The French position was similar. They had bought aircraft from the United States for refuelling the *Force de Frappe*: but once these had been acquired they belonged to France. Now, however, a further defence question arose in relation to the purchase of military aircraft. As he himself had told *General de Gaulle* two years ago and before it had been announced publicly in Britain, the Labour Government had inherited from their predecessors—and this was not a critical comment but a factual one—an aircraft that would have been exceptionally costly and would not have been ready in time to meet the needs of the RAF. When they had been obliged to cancel it, the only plane adequate to fulfil British needs was the F-111, and this we should be using in the late 60s and early 70s. But he would ask the General to note the difference in their current planning situation. The major aircraft for the RAF for the middle and late 70s would now be the Anglo-French plane. *General de Gaulle* assented.

The Prime Minister said that the principle here was of sharing the cost and doubling the market. But the implications went even deeper. By entering this project Britain and France were effectively integrating their aircraft industries. This would be particularly so in the case of aero engines. Shortly we should be jointly producing the most advanced aero engine in the world and the Rolls-Royce/SNECMA combination could hope to force Pratt and Whitney out of the European market. *General de Gaulle* agreed. *The Prime Minister* said that this did, as the General said, make sense whether or not Britain was in the Common Market: it was a useful bilateral development. But what a different situation it reflected from the days when the Nassau Agreement and all it symbolised had been said to poison Anglo-French relations. We could now hope for a greater development of joint arms production leading in due course to a process of Anglo-French co-operation which could make the two countries into the arsenal of Europe.

General de Gaulle said that all this was very true and he recalled his last

conversation with the Prime Minister. Anglo–French co-operation was undoubtedly important; but it could be effective irrespective of British membership of the Common Market. *The Prime Minister* said that what they had been saying was indeed of historic importance and effectively turned the Nassau Agreement on its head. But it should not be forgotten that, in the field of civil production over a wide range of technological industries (*e.g.*, computers), effective and competitive production required not only integration of production and design but also integration of the market. We could not possibly develop effective co-operation with a continuation of high tariffs between the two countries (*General de Gaulle* made sceptical motions of the head).

Sterling

Reverting to the question of sterling, *the Prime Minister* recalled his talks during his last visit with Messieurs Pompidou, Couve de Murville and Rueff⁷. Britain and France did not agree on all these questions but many of the so-called problems of sterling disappeared now that Britain was moving into balance of payments surplus; and some of the other problems of sterling were rather different from the way *General de Gaulle* appeared to conceive them

As regards the *sterling balances* the Prime Minister said he would like to discuss this very fully with France and her partners in the Six; he wondered if a European solution could be found to the problem. The sterling balances were in no way linked to the dollar. There seemed no reason why the problems arising out of them could not be solved on a European basis; if we brought into such a settlement the debts involved, we should not forget that we equally had enormous assets within the sterling area including large investments in the United States. Most of our sterling balances in a sense represented a banker's debt to sterling depositors which could not be drawn on because they represented a reserve for currencies or covered a matching debt to us. But for every pound sterling of debt, we held counter-balancing assets throughout the world. There was therefore no danger whatever to Europe of a run on the sterling balances, because we had the capital to offset it. But while Her Majesty's Government took a different view from the French Government on the liquidity question or the gold problem, he believed that there was room for much greater financial co-operation within Europe. He wished to emphasise the word 'co-operation'—he did not believe that in the foreseeable future a single European currency would emerge or that there would be a supra-national authority telling us all what to do in financial matters. However, the European Payments Union (EPU) had been of considerable value until it was in effect destroyed by the huge German surplus. Again, he and his colleagues did not feel that the well-known differences between France and Britain on monetary and sterling affairs were any fatal obstacle to British membership of the Common Market because equally deep differences divided France and her other partners in the Common Market. Finally, he much agreed with what *General de Gaulle* had said about industrial co-operation and independence; and the British approach to this certainly involved no form of animosity towards the United States. The plain fact was that without industrial independence there could be no real independence for the countries of Europe.

⁷ Jacques Rueff, French economist.

140 CAB 129/129, C(67)63

25 Apr 1967

'Britain and the European Economic Community: Commonwealth interests': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Bowden

It may be useful if I set out briefly for the information of my colleagues the effects on Commonwealth countries of:—

- (i) our joining the European Economic Community without obtaining safeguards for essential Commonwealth interests;
- (ii) the arrangements Commonwealth Governments are likely to ask us to secure on their behalf, and
- (iii) what is likely to be negotiable.

Entry without safeguards

2. Commonwealth countries have traditionally exported their produce to the British market duty free. Moreover, they at present enjoy an average tariff preference of about 12 per cent. If we joined the Community and applied levies or the common external tariff (as appropriate), most Commonwealth imports would, after the transitional period, face a positive duty where they now have free entry and reverse preferences in favour of the Community where they now have preferences. Community products would tend to replace Commonwealth products in our market. This situation would affect different Commonwealth countries in differing degrees.

3. The biggest problem is *New Zealand*. In 1965–66, we took 45 per cent (£168 million) of her total exports. We took 83 per cent (£50 million) of her mutton and lamb, 86 per cent (£47 million) of her butter and 78 per cent (£16 million) of her cheese. If we entered the Community without special safeguards for New Zealand, mutton and lamb would be subject to a 20 per cent tariff. Butter and cheese, which fall within the common agricultural policy, would be subject to levies which, at present levels, would almost double the landed cost of New Zealand supplies. As a result, New Zealand would face immense economic difficulties.

4. The effect on *Australia* would be less serious but still important. We take about one-fifth of her exports. The commodities she sells to us which would be particularly affected include dairy produce (£25 million), meat (£31 million), wheat (£11 million), sugar (£17 million), all types of fruit (£18 million), and lead and zinc (£14 million). The Australian Government estimate that, if we entered EEC without any safeguards for them, their exports to us would drop by £80 million.

5. One-seventh of the exports of *Canada* come to us. Canadian Ministers told us last week that three-quarters of these exports (i.e. about £300 million) would face tariffs or levies if we entered EEC including practically all their cereal and fishery exports to us, over one-third of their other agricultural products, almost 90 per cent of the semi and fully manufactured goods they send us and half their exports to us of such items as newsprint, aluminium and wood pulp.

6. A number of small Commonwealth countries and dependencies rely heavily on sugar exports for their livelihood. *Mauritius*, *Barbados* and *St. Kitts* derive 90 per cent of their export earnings from sugar, and *Guyana* and *Fiji* over 50 per cent. For *Trinidad* and *Jamaica* the proportion is 25 per cent. The Commonwealth Sugar Agreement (CSA), which runs until 1974, ensures that these producers can sell agreed quantities of sugar to Britain at a price (at present £47 10s per ton) which

covers their production costs and shows them a profit. This compares with the present world price of under £20 a ton. The Community is a net exporter of sugar and has a surplus of 400,000 tons compared with our total imports of 2.1 million tons. If we abandoned the CSA on joining the Community, much of the Commonwealth sugar which we now import would have to be sold at world prices. This would almost certainly result in the economic collapse of the countries concerned coupled with widespread unemployment and political unrest.

7. As regards the *rest of the Commonwealth*, they are mainly developing countries and even a small fall in exports to Britain could have unfortunate repercussions in terms of balance of payments and the prosperity of particular areas and communities if we could not secure safeguards for them. We are directly responsible for *Hong Kong*, 20 per cent of whose exports would be affected.

What the Commonwealth governments are likely to ask us to secure

8. (a) *New Zealand*. Permanent arrangements to maintain the level of New Zealand's exports to Britain or to the enlarged Community (or her export earnings).

(b) *Australia*. The same, except to the extent that prices and access to the enlarged Community for cereals, meat, dairy produce and sugar are assured by international commodity agreements.

(c) *Canada*. The same, but with little expectation that we could secure more than transitional arrangements.

(d) *Independent African and Caribbean countries*. The opportunity, as in the 1961–63 negotiations, of applying under Part IV of the Treaty of Rome for either:—

(i) comprehensive association, like the signatories of the Yaoundé Convention,¹ or

(ii) limited association, like Nigeria, or

(iii) trade agreements with the enlarged Community.

A Morocco-type Protocol, as provisionally agreed in 1962, for *Botswana* and *Lesotho*.

(e) *Independent Asian Commonwealth countries*. Association as in (d), with the possible exception of *Malaysia* which would be affected only marginally by our entry into the Community. *India* will want us to secure certain tariff reductions on specific commodities and access for cotton textiles.

(f) *Cyprus and Malta*. Association under Article 238 of the Rome Treaty (i.e. similar to the association arrangements which the Six have concluded with Greece and Turkey).

(g) *Dependent Territories and Associated States in the Caribbean*. Association under Part IV of the Rome Treaty, as provisionally agreed in 1962 except for:—

(i) *Swaziland*. A Morocco-type Protocol as provisionally agreed in 1962.

(ii) *Gibraltar*. Transitional arrangements to allow the Colony to adopt her free port status to her new position as an integral part of the Community.

(h) *Sugar producing countries*. Continuation of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement until 1974 and if possible thereafter; if not possibly its replacement by arrangements equally favourable to Commonwealth producers.

(i) *Irish Republic*. The Irish intend to apply to join EEC if we do and would

¹ See 376, note 3.

conduct their own negotiations. If they are accepted there is no problem at this stage.

9. This is not an exhaustive list. In particular, we can expect to be asked by the Commonwealth Governments concerned to make special arrangements to safeguard exports to Britain of *tobacco* and *bananas* and, in the case of certain African countries, their exports of temperate agricultural products.

What is likely to be negotiable

10. It is clear that we could not expect to secure everything in the above list. How much we would obtain for Commonwealth countries is at this stage largely a matter of guesswork. The areas in which we should have great difficulty in satisfying Commonwealth desires, and in which we might fail, include the following:—

(a) *New Zealand*. We might have a hard struggle to secure permanent as distinct from long-term arrangements for her.

(b) *Australia and Canada*. We should probably be unable to secure any permanent derogations for them and the outcome would probably be transitional periods for the gradual application of the levy and/or the common external tariff, with perhaps some reduced duty quotas on a few industrial raw materials.

(c) *Independent Asian Commonwealth countries*. There would be no prospect of obtaining association for them. All that we would be likely to secure are the arrangements agreed provisionally with the Six in 1962, i.e. comprehensive trade agreements and some tariff reductions and quota arrangements for them.

(d) *Hong Kong*. Again, there would be no prospect of obtaining association and we might have to settle for an arrangement under which the common external tariff would be applied to imports into Britain from Hong Kong over a transitional period, with provision for review if damage was being caused to her.

(e) *Sugar*. We might have great difficulty in persuading the Six to agree to adequate arrangements for the sugar producing islands.

11. If these guesses are correct, we should have considerable difficulty with certain Commonwealth Governments, particularly Australia, the sugar producing islands, and, perhaps for certain commodities, India. If the guesses prove over-optimistic, our entry could inflict severe economic damage not only upon these countries but also on New Zealand and perhaps Cyprus, Malta and the Caribbean countries. In either event, a number of Commonwealth countries would be likely to claim, with some justice, that we had not fulfilled our commitment to safeguard their essential interests.

12. What is said above concerns only the effect our entry into the EEC would have upon the interests of Commonwealth countries and their exports to us. But of course the abolition of the preferences we give to Commonwealth countries and the erection of reverse preferences against them in our market would inevitably lead them to terminate the preferences they accord to us. This would lead to major reductions in our exports to the Commonwealth. Mr. McEwen, the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia,² told me yesterday that he estimates that we would lose £160 million of exports to Australia which is about half our present level of exports to her. Though I do not necessarily accept his figure, it is a fact that nearly £1,000 million of our total exports enjoy preferences.

² J McEwen, deputy prime minister, Australia, 1968–1971, prime minister, Dec 1967–Jan 1968.

141 FCO 20/14, no 2

26 Apr 1967

‘EEC’: minute by Sir S Garner to Mr Bowden on the problem of safeguarding Commonwealth interests

There is already a wealth of paper on this subject, but the issue before us is so important that perhaps I might attempt to sum up with a few general points:—

(i) There is no real alternative to our joining the E.E.C.—except the policy of ‘go it alone’ (or, as it has been more bravely styled, ‘self reliance’). But ‘go it alone’ does not have a very convincing ring after all the months spent in agonising over Europe (and would be all the less convincing if we were to have a rebuff).

(ii) It seems a fair assumption that the balance in the Government will be in favour of making an attempt to join E.E.C.

(iii) If so the real question is how, when and on what terms we attempt this (see below).

(iv) The decision on whether we should make the attempt depends on a calculation of what would be in the best interests of Britain for the future. There are extremely complicated issues here (see, for example, the widely divergent views about the effect on the balance of payments). The Commonwealth Office as such is not concerned with these domestic issues.

(v) Nor need the Commonwealth Office raise any objection to an attempted entry into Europe on political grounds. No doubt our entry into Europe would inevitably have some intangible effects on the Commonwealth association, but they should be tolerable. There seems no prospect in the near future at least of the E.E.C. developing into a supra-national state and, once we were in, we could guide it on the right lines. There has been no recrudescence of the objections raised in 1962 by Mr. Nehru and, more irresponsibly, by Mr. Diefenbaker¹ about the harmful political effects on the Commonwealth.

(vi) On the contrary Commonwealth Governments and Commonwealth public opinion generally expects us to make the attempt. Many Commonwealth leaders (notably in the old Commonwealth) consider that it would be in British interests and would therefore be to their advantage in the long run by strengthening the British economy.

(vii) The vital point as far as the Commonwealth Office is concerned is that we should adhere to our commitment to ‘safeguard essential Commonwealth interests’ if we do go in.

(viii) This, as we know from the 1962 discussions and from the soundings taken during the ‘probe’ and as is shown in your paper,² will be far from easy.

(ix) Unless we safeguard essential Commonwealth interests, at least to a reasonable extent, we shall:—

(a) have gone back on our word;

(b) disrupt the Commonwealth in a way which could have incalculable repercussions; and more particularly

(c) deal a crippling blow at our own trade with Commonwealth countries, since they are bound to retaliate if we cut them off from our markets. In spite of all

¹ J Nehru, prime minister of India, 1947–1964, and J Diefenbaker, prime minister of Canada, 1957–1963.

² See 140.

the talk about the erosion of preference, our trade with the Commonwealth is still quantitatively very important, amounting to more than a quarter of our total exports (i.e. half as much again as with the whole of E.E.C. and more than twice as much as with the U.S.A.).

(x) The vital point for us is that we ensure that any negotiation for our entry into E.E.C. succeeds in safeguarding essential Commonwealth interests.

(xi) On this the memorandum by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary is ambiguous. It rules out any unconditional application (quite rightly—though theoretically it might have been examined as an alternative course E), but it then goes on to talk of stating our terms publicly (and presumably in a very general way) and of a ‘short and simple’ negotiation which would apparently be followed by the real negotiations after we had been accepted as a member (since the memorandum talks of the advantages of negotiating as a member).

(xii) It seems to me that there are great dangers here. We do not need to dot every ‘i’ and cross every ‘t’ (e.g. kangaroo meat) in advance of entry. But it seems to me that the only way in which we are likely to pull this thing off is as a result of complicated and possibly lengthy negotiations conducted in parallel with E.E.C. and the Commonwealth. Unless we have cast iron guarantees in advance (and I do not see how they can be adequate without a detailed negotiation), we are most unlikely to be able to meet our commitment to safeguard essential Commonwealth interests, since there will then be an overwhelming argument that we must sacrifice the Commonwealth rather than the membership of the Community, on which by that time such great hopes will have been built.

142 CAB128/42, CC 26(67)

30 Apr 1967

‘Approach to Europe’: conclusions of a Cabinet meeting held at Chequers¹

[For Richard Crossman’s diary account of this meeting, see *The diaries of a Cabinet minister* Vol Two *Lord president of the Council and leader of the House of Commons 1966–68* (London: 1976, pp 333–336).]

The Cabinet resumed their discussion of the approach to Europe. They considered a memorandum by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (C (67) 60) outlining a number of alternative courses relating to a decision whether or not to apply for membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) and when to do so.

The Foreign Secretary said that the Prime Minister and he had sought to describe in their paper the alternative courses before the Cabinet in regard to membership of the EEC and their respective advantages and disadvantages. The attitude of the French Government was crucial to the progress of any application: but the choice of

¹ Present: Wilson, Brown, Stewart, Callaghan, Lord Gardiner (lord chancellor), Bowden, Crossman (lord president of the Council), Healey, Jenkins (Home Office), William Ross (Scotland), Gordon Walker (minister without portfolio), Jay, Crosland (Education), Greenwood (Housing and Local Government), Lord Longford (lord privy seal), Ray Gunter (Labour), Peart (Agriculture), Barbara Castle (Transport), Cledwyn Hughes (as secretary of state for Wales, 1966–1968), Richard Marsh (Power), Wedgwood Benn (Technology). Frederick Mulley (minister of state, FO), Sir E Jones (attorney-general), and John Silkin (parliamentary secretary, Treasury) were also present.

the right tactics should help us to neutralise French opposition. The French would prefer that we did not apply at all, thus saving them from the need to express a view on British membership. It was for this reason that they had suggested the alternatives of associate membership and of 'something new and different'. But associate membership would impose on us most of the obligations of membership with few of the rights, while 'something new' was in reality no more than a delaying device on the part of President de Gaulle.

There were five broad courses before the Government. First, we could decide that we should not apply for membership of the Community. Any assessment of this course required a comparison of the likely course of events if we joined the Community and if we remained outside; and many of the elements in such a comparison could not be quantified. If we decided not to join the EEC it was most unlikely that we should succeed in joining any alternative economic grouping: in such circumstances we could expect little support from the United States for the formation of an Atlantic Free Trade Area, even though their view might be different if we applied to join the EEC and were then rebuffed. If we failed to seek membership of the EEC and remained outside any economic grouping, it was likely that public opinion and industry would be critical and that private investment would fail to revive.

The second course of action was to postpone a decision while we sought further information on the terms which might be available for British entry; but it was unlikely that we should learn much more from further discussions. Those EEC countries which were willing to discuss the prospects for British membership in a constructive spirit had already done so, while the French would use the opportunity to cast doubts on our sincerity and determination. Conversely, those EEC countries which most keenly supported our entry would be discouraged and the momentum generated by the tour would be dissipated.

The third possibility was to decide in principle that we would apply for membership but to engage in a further period of investigation before putting in our application. This course would provide us with little more information than we should be able to secure through the second course; and a declaration of intent without an early application might still be taken as discouraging by our friends in the Community, who were urging us to press ahead quickly. The fourth possibility, which was not described in C (67) 60, was to follow the example of the previous Administration and to apply for entry on a conditional basis 'to see if the conditions we required could be met'. The Six might, however, well respond to such an approach by refusing to start negotiations at all on the ground that our approach did not constitute a genuine application: or negotiations might start only to break down later in prolonged arguments over detail. The responsibility for the failure would then be placed on the United Kingdom, and the Government would be accused of having learned nothing from their predecessors' mistakes.

The fifth course was to apply now for negotiations for early membership of the Community. If this course were followed it would be better to make a new application than to ask for a resumption of the negotiations which had broken down in 1963. The timetable of likely developments both in the United Kingdom and in the Community over the next five years argued that we should make an early application with a view to membership in 1969 or 1970. In 1969 the Community would have to negotiate new arrangements both for agricultural finance and for their associated

states. We should so time our entry as to be able to influence the revision of these arrangements in our own interests from within the Community. From the point of view of the strength and stability of our domestic economy we should not be ready to enter the Community until 1969; but if entry were deferred much beyond that time many of the dynamic effects on the British economy would be lost, United States investment would turn away from us towards Europe and industrial confidence here would decline. By 1969–70 we should be in a position to relax the stern policies we had undertaken in order to restore a healthy economy; and that would be the appropriate time at which to undertake new obligations arising from membership of the Community.

If it were decided that we should apply now to negotiate for early membership of the Community, our application should be made before the meeting of Heads of Governments of the Six in late May. If this were not done the French would be able to postpone the start of serious negotiations for the greater part of a year: and if negotiations did not begin until 1968 we should not achieve membership until after the renegotiation of Community arrangements in 1969. It was therefore important that we should apply at a very early stage. The appropriate procedure would be to explain to Parliament, either in a statement or a White Paper, what the major difficulties were, but to avoid attaching conditions specifically to our application for membership. We should be able to secure better terms on many issues of importance to us if we negotiated from inside the Community rather than as applicants for membership. On many of the most difficult points we should find support for our point of view from present members of the Community: but since we should get support on different issues from different countries this backing would be much more readily available to us if we were already members. The accession of other new members as well as ourselves would further change the present voting pattern within the Community. Although our essential interests would have to be determined and stated to Parliament in advance, the detailed arrangements which we should be willing to accept should only be settled as the negotiations proceeded. The case for joining the Community could be made both on economic and political grounds. Although it was true that there would be disadvantages as well as advantages for the economy, particularly in the short term, it was wrong to exaggerate the disadvantages especially since, by doing so, we risked giving the impression to the Six that we would look to them to assist us in our economic difficulties. Any public presentation of the arguments should state the economic advantages arising, for example, from the reduction of tariffs and the added incentive to investment. On the political side, membership of the Community would give us far greater opportunities in foreign policy in relation to Western Europe, to Europe as a whole, and to the rest of the world: the addition of a European connection to our existing links with the United States and the Commonwealth would give us opportunities for political leadership which would not exist if we remained in isolation. Although the EEC was at present dominated by France, this dominance rested solely on the personality of President de Gaulle, whose eventual departure from the scene would end French dominance of the Community and create a vacuum that could only be filled, if the EEC remained as at present constituted, by Western Germany. There were already signs that the United States was paying increasing regard to Western Germany among her European allies and it seemed probable that, if we failed to pursue our opportunities for leadership in Europe, Western Germany's influence on the United

States would more and more replace our own. Both for economic and political reasons, therefore, the Prime Minister and he had recommended in their paper that the United Kingdom should make a clear application now to negotiate for early membership of the Community; that our essential interests should be set out in a statement to Parliament; but that the Government should not stipulate conditions at the time of their application which would commit them, before negotiations had taken place, on the terms which they would be willing to accept at the end of the day.

In discussion there was no support for the course of action which involved postponing a decision while we sought information on the terms which might be available for British entry. Differing views were however expressed on the alternative courses of deciding:—

- (i) That we should not now apply for membership of the Community.
- (ii) That we should decide in principle to apply for membership but engage in a further period of investigation before putting in our application.
- (iii) That we should put in an application for membership on a conditional basis.
- (iv) That we should apply now for negotiations for early membership of the Community, while making it clear to Parliament and the public that we should in negotiation seek amelioration of the Community arrangements which would involve special difficulty for us either in the more important cases before entry or in the less important after entry.

Some Ministers took the view that we should either not now apply for entry or that, if the view were taken that political expectations had been so aroused that this course was no longer practicable, we should nevertheless only decide in principle to apply while undertaking a further period of investigation or alternatively that we should only apply on a conditional basis. In support of these views the following main arguments were advanced:—

(a) The economic and industrial advantages of joining the Community, which it had been maintained would in the longer term considerably offset the immediate disadvantages to our balance of payments, were not only unquantifiable, but had not been proven. In view of the admittedly adverse initial effects on our balance of payments, the onus of proof in respect of the longer-term advantages rested with the proponents of this course. The arguments which had been advanced related primarily to the stimulus to industrial investment that would be given by our entry, to the advantages of a larger market and to the further stimulus of competition which United Kingdom industry would have to meet from European industry. The stimulus to additional investment might well, however, prove to be illusory in the event. An early application might well be followed by a year or more of abortive negotiation which would have an immediately depressing effect on our industry. Moreover, if, as the weight of evidence suggested, the initial effects of joining the Community were economically adverse, industrial investment would be still further depressed. We had in any event access to a large market both in the United Kingdom and in EFTA, but the industrial advantage of a large market had been overstressed. Sweden was an outstanding example of a small country which was economically highly successful, *e.g.*, in shipbuilding and steel production, although it did not belong to a large integrated market. In certain fields, however, where a large market was admittedly of importance, it was doubtful whether Europe alone provided a sufficient base. In some joint defence projects and in other fields such as space

communications, experience showed that it was essential to extend the sphere of collaboration beyond Europe. The relative failure of some EEC initiatives in the technological field, such as Euratom, demonstrated the inadequacy of the European market by itself for such purposes. Finally, there was no reason to suppose that additional competition would provide the spur that British industry required. The additional competition to which our industry had been subjected in recent years had not resulted in an increase in relative efficiency, *e.g.*, in motor manufacture.

(b) There was particular reason for concern at the restrictions which membership of the EEC might impose on our policies of regional development. The freedom of capital movement would leave it open to manufacturers who were reluctant to establish factories in development areas of the United Kingdom to build factories on the Continent instead. No studies of the probable implications of joining the Community for particular industries or particular regions had been carried out, nor had there been any adequate study of the structural changes which would be involved for British industry. Such information as was available in respect of the weakening of our controls for the direction of industry and also on the effect on agriculture in Scotland, Wales and Northern England all implied that entry would be disadvantageous to the interests of the development areas.

(c) Agriculturally there could be no doubt that acceptance of the c.a.p. would have an adverse effect on our balance of payments, whatever arguments there might be about the degree of damage which would be caused. The c.a.p. would mean abandoning our present system of agricultural support, which provided security for farmers, and substituting a more competitive system which was less in accord with the Government's political aims. It was generally admitted that by any objective standard the c.a.p. was a less satisfactory system than our own and the deficiencies of the levy system had been widely emphasised by Ministers in recent public pronouncements. Whatever view we might take of the relative importance of the agricultural industry in the United Kingdom, serious damage to the industry could not be justified on any broad view of the national interest.

(d) These doubts relating to the industrial and agricultural implications of joining the Community, especially in respect of our regional policies, further emphasised the disadvantages to our balance of payments which would arise on joining the Community, as had been argued in earlier Cabinet discussion on this aspect. It was suggested that the additional strain which accession would impose on our balance of payments could be as much as 10 times the net cost of our oversea defence expenditure. After intense effort by the present Administration over a period of two years since coming to office, there had still been in 1966 a deficit on the balance of payments of £200 million and the prospect only of a small surplus in 1967. This had been achieved at the cost of reducing the rate of growth of the gross national product (GNP) to only 1 per cent. To achieve a large enough surplus to offset the disadvantages of entry in terms of balance of payments we should require an annual rate of growth of the GNP of 3 per cent and it was by no means certain that we could achieve that rate, despite the present estimate for the ensuing year. Even if we did so, the Government would still not be able to offer the country any hope of relief from this policy of austerity by the early 1970s. Entry into the Community would on the contrary entail the need to bring about a shift of resources and to reduce personal consumption in order to offset the adverse effects on the balance of payments. This continuing policy of austerity would not be acceptable to the country.

Nor should we assume that even in the longer term our balance of payments position would be secured by membership of the Community. It was noteworthy that France and Germany were now in difficulties over their balance of payments.

(e) Nor could we assume that accession would increase our export earnings, since the loss of preferences in EFTA and Commonwealth markets would outweigh gains resulting from the removal of EEC tariffs. Entry would also deprive us of many of our present governmental powers for protecting the balance of payments. We should have to abandon our present exchange control and our power to control imports during balance of payments difficulties. Nor, in view of the assurances which had been given during the tour that we would not have recourse to aid from the Six, as such, under Article 108 of the Treaty of Rome in cases where our difficulties on balance of payments resulted from the role of sterling as a reserve currency, could we gain any worthwhile benefit through additional co-operation in the monetary field. In broader terms the economic difficulties which our entry would entail would thus tend to make us politically dependent on the Six in exchange for our present policy of dependence on the United States, whereas experience indicated that the United States would be a more advantageous ally to us than the EEC.

(f) Entry into the Community, or even an application to join, would seriously damage our Commonwealth interests. Admittedly other Commonwealth countries had in recent years diversified their pattern of trade but, while we had failed to increase our Commonwealth trade, its absolute level had not diminished in consequence. If, however, we were to apply for entry the other members of the Commonwealth would naturally intensify the diversification of their trade.

(g) In addition to injury to our own trade with the Commonwealth, our entry would cause serious damage to the interests of other Commonwealth countries. Acceptance of the c.a.p. would mean that our imports from traditional Commonwealth suppliers would be subject to a levy and we should be giving preference to imports from EEC countries. Several of the smaller Commonwealth countries were almost completely dependent on the export of sugar under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement and unless their interests could be adequately safeguarded the effect on their economies would be disastrous. Transitional arrangements would not suffice for this purpose. We should not seek to negotiate changes on behalf of the Commonwealth only after we had made an application for entry: in that event we should have little bargaining strength and should be forced to concede points on which pledges had been made by the Government. Although the attitude of other Commonwealth countries had in recent years sometimes been politically embarrassing to us, it was still in our interest to maintain as far as possible the unity of the Commonwealth and our influence in it. In addition to the damage which entry into the Community would cause to this political relationship and to mutual Commonwealth trade, acceptance of the freedom of movement of labour within the Community would involve discrimination against Commonwealth citizens in favour of EEC nationals, contrary to the Government's declared policy.

(h) The political advantages of joining the Community had been over-emphasised since we should thereby damage our Commonwealth relationships and we should still not escape the limitations on our freedom of action imposed by our special relationship with the United States. While it was admittedly arguable that joining a larger group of nations would enhance our political influence, this would only be significant if the members of the Community were to pursue a single

European foreign policy on which we could exert influence only as a member. But the Six were in fact wholly divided on major issues of foreign policy and we could exert influence upon them at present as effectively as if we were a member of the Community. Nor was it necessarily the case that the United States would be likely to develop a closer relationship with Western Germany than with ourselves if we were not to join the Community; indeed recent developments had led the United States substantially to change their views on the reliability of the Germans as allies.

(i) The political effects of joining the Community should not be considered wholly or even primarily in terms of our foreign policy. Political and economic considerations could not validly be differentiated. The Government's political position in the United Kingdom had suffered serious damage through the economic policies which they had been forced to adopt in consequence of the continuation of defence commitments overseas and the restraints imposed by our special relationship with the United States. The continuation of these policies would seriously damage the position of the Government in subsequent years.

In the light of these considerations some Ministers took the view that we should not make any application to join the Community. Others who would in principle have preferred not to apply expressed the view that this was now politically impracticable because the Government's freedom of action had been circumscribed by the momentum which had been built up and stimulated by Press publicity in favour of entry. In such circumstances, these Ministers suggested that the best course would be to delay the initiation of negotiations. Such delay would avoid the imposition of an additional burden on our balance of payments in the years immediately ahead when we might be unable to sustain its burden. Furthermore, it was clear that President de Gaulle would oppose any concessions to British interest which would make entry easier for us. On the most optimistic interpretation of his attitude his aim was to prolong negotiations for a sufficient time to prevent our membership during his lifetime. Nor would he conceivably agree that major policies like those arising on the c.a.p., where significant concessions were essential to us, could be revised in 1969 with ourselves as full members of the Community: rather he would seek to ensure that we accepted before entry what the c.a.p. should be after 1969. It seemed unlikely that it would be possible for us to obtain satisfactory terms as long as President de Gaulle remained in power and we should therefore engage in a further period of investigation before putting in a formal application. This course would be on balance economically advantageous, despite the depressing effect which it might immediately have on the expectations of British industry, since, if we entered the EEC before we had achieved a strong balance of payments, the depressing consequences for our economy would result in both United States and United Kingdom further investment taking place in Europe rather than in the United Kingdom. We should not ignore the advice from certain quarters that an application for membership at the present time would be likely to fail. The tour by the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary had shown that the Federal German Government were far less willing to put pressure on the French in respect of our entry than we had previously hoped and it had been the view of the Federal German Ministers that we should confine ourselves at present to a declaration of intent and defer an application. It was only under subsequent pressure from us that they had modified this view. Our partners in EFTA also doubted whether an application in the immediate future would be successful.

It was further suggested that if, despite these considerations, we were to put in an early application for entry, it was essential that our application should itself be accompanied by a clear statement of the minimum conditions which we would require. This might be in terms similar to those used in the Labour Party's last Election Manifesto to the effect that essential British and Commonwealth interests would have to be safeguarded. If these essential conditions were not made clear in our application we might later find ourselves in the position that it would be too late to withdraw from the negotiations but that we could not achieve satisfactory conditions. In particular this course was necessary to safeguard the pledges which we had given in respect of Commonwealth interests. It was an illusion to believe that we should be in a better position to negotiate acceptable terms on the main issues as a member of the Community rather than as a candidate for membership. Once we had entered the Community we should lose much of our bargaining power since we should no longer be able to profit from the fact that the Five at least wished us to become members. A further factor which would strengthen our hands in negotiations if these took place before entry was that industry in Western Germany was anxious to gain access to the EFTA market and this would no longer be a factor we could influence after we had joined. In negotiations in the Community we must bear in mind that the basic aim of the Six was to maintain a protective régime for agriculture and we should thus find a majority of the Commission opposed to us on agricultural issues. If we were to state our conditions for entry as part of our application, it would be easier for us to withdraw and to justify our position subsequently if we failed to obtain satisfactory terms. The point was also made that, whatever course might be adopted, we should defer any application over the following two weeks during which time negotiations in the Kennedy Round would be at their crucial stage since their success might be jeopardised by the effect of an early application from us.

The balance of opinion in the Cabinet proved however to be substantially in favour of making an immediate application for entry unaccompanied by conditions. This course in no way implied that we should seek to enter the Community unconditionally. On the contrary the Government would at the time of their statement that such an application would be made also inform Parliament of the essential interests which we should have to safeguard in the negotiation. These interests would therefore be made clearly known not only to the country, but also to members of the Community. But to state conditions publicly in Parliament was substantially different from attaching specific conditions to an application for entry.

In support of these views the following arguments were advanced:—

(j) Even in the short term there were economic advantages to be derived from an application to join the EEC, primarily through the impetus which it would give to industrial investment in view of the expectations of British industry; and we should begin to reap these advantages at the time of our declaration and before the initial impact of the disadvantages, which would only begin at the outset of the transitional period in, say, 1970.

(k) In considering the balance of economic advantage and disadvantage, such disadvantages as would be entailed by entry must be balanced not only against the advantages, but also against the disadvantages that would be entailed by our abstaining from joining any larger economic grouping. These disadvantages must be expected to increase with time. Recent events had shown that our capacity to plan

our economy independently was less than had hitherto been supposed. Pressures upon us had prevented the policy on prices and incomes from being as effective as we would have wished. We had also been unable to control the course of investment by foreign companies as fully as would have been desirable in principle, because of the pressure of economic forces. The continental countries were in process of evolving a political organisation which would be more suited to modern economic needs and it would be contrary to our interests to stand aside while their decisions were being taken. We must not assume that, if we did not secure entry at an early date, our situation would remain unchanged. The importance of a larger home market for industrial development would increase. Industry in the Community, because it was based on such a larger market, would increase its competitive advantage over British industry. It was misleading to adduce Sweden in support of a policy of abstention from any such larger group, since both Government and industry in Sweden were in favour of entering the EEC and their main concern was that we might become a member and Sweden might fail to do so. Only by becoming part of a larger market could we escape the dilemma that, if industrial firms were to grow to the size required by modern technology, they would through their size acquire a monopolistic position in any one country. Furthermore, in the coming years the EEC would be developing standards in such aspects of industry as commercial law and insurance and our exclusion from these and other developments would restrict our economic opportunities.

(l) The requirements imposed by the development of modern technology for the minimum size of firms able to compete in world markets meant that we ourselves could not compete against the United States domination in this field, particularly if we also bore in mind the outflow of scientists and technologists from this country to the United States and the large resources which their firms were able to deploy. Only in co-operation with Europe could not only we ourselves but also European firms acquire the industrial base which would enable Europe as a whole to compete with the United States. It would be important to bear in mind in negotiations that we should bring to the European Community a large and advanced technological capacity which would be a source of strength to Europe if we joined, but equally a grave disadvantage to them if we were excluded and in consequence came increasingly under the technological domination of United States industry.

(m) In considering the advantages and disadvantages for our balance of payments in the short term of joining the Community we could expect that there would be some adverse effect in the short term but this should not be over-emphasised for the reasons which had been fully developed in earlier discussion by the Cabinet on this issue and need not be repeated in detail. In any event and even on the more adverse calculations, which took no account of mitigations which we might secure in negotiation, we should bear in mind that the adverse consequences would be recouped over a five-year period by an increase of about one-half of 1 per cent in the rate of growth of industrial productivity. The papers before the Cabinet showed that the economic policy which the Government were pursuing was not only necessary but was also the policy best calculated to meet the requirements imposed by joining the Community. Far from entry making it more difficult to pursue this policy, it would ease the strain imposed by it because of the stimulus which entry would give to industrial investment. The comparison which had been made between the cost to the balance of payments of entering the EEC and our oversea defence

expenditure was invalid. *Inter alia*, it rested on the higher of two widely spaced estimates of the total cost of entry. Furthermore, our present national difficulties resulted from two main causes: a level of defence expenditure overseas disproportionate to our resources and our international isolation from large national groupings which increasingly dominated the world economy. On this analysis it would be right to save foreign exchange by reducing our overseas defence expenditure and if necessary to incur short-term additional foreign exchange expenditure in order to remedy these deficiencies. We could not however quantify even the adverse effects on our balance of payments until we were aware of the conditions which we could negotiate for entry. These could only be ascertained by entering into negotiations. The papers which had been studied by the Cabinet had shown that many of the regulations made under the Treaty of Rome allowed for derogations in the interests of individual countries and it was reasonable to expect that similar derogations would be made to meet our own particular national interests. If we were to become a member we should then be enabled substantially to mitigate the adverse effects on our balance of payments. Even in the agricultural field the adverse effects of the c.a.p. should not be over-estimated. Producers of cereals would benefit substantially while there was good reason to expect that means could be devised of obtaining assistance from the Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund for the small farmers in Scotland, Wales and the North of England whose interests might suffer from other aspects of the c.a.p. If we could negotiate such assistance we should not only help the farmers concerned but reduce *pro tanto* the burden of levy contributions on our balance of payments.

(n) Even if, despite these considerations, the economic consequences of joining the Community proved to be no more than evenly balanced, the political advantages of joining were decisive. If we continued in our present position we must recognise that in international politics our influence had markedly declined. For example, we had been obliged to adopt United States policies in a number of fields and even in relation to a former dependency, Guyana; the Soviet Union had been the effective mediator between India and Pakistan during the recent conflict in Kashmir; and we had been unable to discharge fully our obligations in respect of Rhodesia. In other spheres we had to a substantial extent felt bound to follow the policies of the United States; and it would be contrary to the views of a large number of the Government's supporters to be forced to continue in this position. We must not in any event allow ourselves to become totally dependent on the United States nor on the other hand could we contemplate aligning our policies with the Soviet *bloc*: joining the Community was essential if we were to avoid finding ourselves increasingly isolated and powerless in world affairs. We must also have regard to the dangers which would arise in Europe if we were not to become a member of the Community. In that event, and particularly after the death of President de Gaulle, the Community would become increasingly dominated by Western Germany and there were ample indications of the fears of other European countries of the consequences of such domination, whether or not it was accompanied (to our further disadvantage) by a closer relationship between Western Germany and the United States. In fact if we failed to enter the EEC there was a serious danger that the Community would become increasingly estranged from the United States. Since the United States was the only major Power which was committed to the maintenance of the democratic freedoms in which we believed, it was fundamental to our interests to prevent such a

development. The EEC had, despite its diversity, become a group with substantial power and influence. This had recently been exemplified in the discussions on international monetary reform and in the Kennedy Round. If we were to join the Community we could expect to be influential in persuading the other members to adopt more liberal and less inward-looking policies. We could hope to gain a new role of political leadership which would provide the political stimulus formerly given by our imperial role. Moreover, United Kingdom membership of the EEC would not represent so much a change of policy as an extension, albeit a significant one, of our present involvement in Europe which was expressed in our membership of such bodies as the Council of Europe, the Western European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. We had recently made one minor but significant extension of our commitment to Europe through a decision to accept the right of individual petitions to the European Human Rights Commission and Court. In the field of human rights and in other legal fields we had contributed much to European development and our experience here suggested that so far from having difficulty in acquiring influence we could easily assume a leading, and even dominant, role.

(o) It was also suggested that entry into Europe should be regarded as a first step towards ultimate ideal world government.

It was further argued that there were strong reasons for making an early application for entry, deriving both from the advantages of doing so and from the disadvantages of delay. Further bilateral discussions and the accumulation of further factual information could not be expected to give the Cabinet any clearer picture of the situation than they had now. Requests to the Six for such further information would either give an impression of vacillation on our part or would lead to substantive negotiations. But to ask for further assurances before beginning negotiations would strengthen the hands of those who opposed our entry. Indeed, in considering the extent to which the momentum which our approach to Europe had acquired and the consequences of this for the Government's freedom of action, it should not be forgotten that the extent of public support and particularly the extent of opinion in favour of application on the part of the Government's supporters in Parliament had itself contributed to the momentum which had led to the earlier decision that the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary should visit the capitals of the Six on their tour of investigation. If we were to enter the EEC the present was a particularly favourable time. There had been a check in the last few years to the Community's evolution towards a supranational form of organisation. It was important that we should become members of the Community in order to influence its policy before any advance towards political union was resumed. The recent improvement in relations between the Council of Ministers and the Commission also made the present time opportune for us to seek entry. The same considerations applied with particular force to the need to obtain the opportunity of influencing the renegotiation of the c.a.p. when this fell due for review in 1969. There was no case for postponement on economic grounds since it was impossible to forecast with any accuracy whether our relative economic strength would be greater in the early 1970s. Failure to apply now would dismay the Five and our partners in EFTA and would damage our relations with the United States. It would be impossible to revive the momentum for entry some years hence after receiving such a check. Moreover, while admittedly no one could forecast what attitude President de Gaulle might

adopt, it was relevant not only that influential figures in France opposed to him were in favour of our entry but that the Gaullist leaders, who might be expected to prefer that we should make an application during the lifetime of President de Gaulle, because he would be in the best position to rebuff us or to impose stringent conditions, showed on the contrary anxiety lest we should make an early application for entry. This suggested that they took the view that the longer we delayed the harder it would be for us to secure entry on acceptable terms. In short, delay would play into the hands of General de Gaulle and his closest supporters.

An early application was moreover desirable for negative as well as for positive reasons. The worst possible outcome for the United Kingdom would be for the present uncertainty over our relationship with the EEC to continue. Public opinion was now largely in favour of application for entry and the Government would only be able to apply the economic policies which would be required if we were to make a success of a policy of abstaining from any economic grouping if we had first applied for membership of the EEC and had been rejected. Moreover, once we had made our application we should not be able to force the pace of negotiations and it was possible that the French would seek to prolong them to the point where we found it necessary to discontinue them. If we reached this point it would be important that we should do so in time to make effective our alternative policies before the end of the present decade.

Nor would it be desirable to make an application accompanied by conditions. It was clear from Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome that to make an application without qualification did not imply unconditional accession to the Treaty. The Treaty itself envisaged that conditions of entry would emerge in the course of discussion of the application. Moreover, to make an application accompanied by conditions would *inter alia* provide the French Government with a ready opportunity for vetoing our application on the ground that it was not seriously intended and our tactics must be to make a veto by the French difficult, if not impossible. The best way to do so would be to make our application in the simplest possible form. It would be contrary to normal tactics in any negotiation to demand at the outset as a condition of entering into negotiations the precise conditions which a negotiator sought to obtain on their conclusion. If in such circumstances our application were to fail, blame for the failure of such a major governmental initiative would be ascribed by opinion both at home and abroad to the Government; and failure in such circumstances would leave behind no sense of concerted national purpose which would enable us to carry through effectively the policies which the situation would then require. An application without conditions attached did not of course imply that there were not certain minimum conditions which we must negotiate before we could accept entry nor that there were not other changes which we should seek to negotiate after entry.

Our position in these respects could properly be set out in Parliament in the Government's statements in respect of their application. But such a course would be substantially different from our attaching such conditions to our application itself. If this course were followed it would be important to distinguish in the announcement to Parliament between the interests which we should wish to establish before entry and the objectives for which we should strive in negotiations thereafter. The aim should be to keep the former to a minimum since we would be better placed to secure certain concessions as a member rather than a candidate. The interests which we should have to stipulate before entry might be confined to safeguarding the

position of New Zealand, to suitable arrangements for the sugar exports of the smaller Commonwealth countries, whether dependent or independent, and to suitable transitional periods on other matters. We should so far as possible refrain from giving specific commitments about the course we would follow in negotiations after entry on other aspects such as the renegotiation of the c.a.p. in 1969. An application in these terms would have the further advantage that it offered the best choice of avoiding protracted negotiations which would be gravely disadvantageous to us.

The Prime Minister said that at this stage he would not seek to sum up the discussion. In considering some of the points which had been made we should recognise that so far as our foreign policy was concerned we were not considering the possibility of a Europe organised on federal lines; what was involved was the degree of influence that we might be able to exert on major decisions of foreign policy in the future. Major difficulties and perhaps a period of disorder might occur in France after the death of President de Gaulle and disquieting tendencies were discernible in Germany. If we were inside the EEC we would be able to exert our influence in the formative stages of policy, whereas outside it we should not be able to do so and might be forced into closer association with United States policy in the Far East. Similarly, if we were a member of the EEC we could influence developments of Community policy on world liquidity. So far as the economic aspects were concerned, he had said in public speeches that the case for our entry was not proven, but this statement related explicitly only to the basis of quantifiable information available to us at present; this did not take account of changes that we might secure in the course of negotiations. Relations with the Commonwealth in recent years in economic matters had been disappointing. There had been little attempt on the part of other Commonwealth countries to look other than to their narrow national interests. In spite of the initiatives we had taken at the Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in 1965 there had been a complete failure to take concerted Commonwealth action, even in respect of Government purchases. New Zealand and Australia preferred to purchase American aircraft of types not superior to our own. Canada had done nothing to redress our adverse trade balance with her and although she was giving economic aid, especially in the Caribbean, she was doing less in proportion to her GNP than we were. In the Far East the policies of Australia and New Zealand were increasingly diverging from our own, with a very strong emphasis on their narrow area of interest in South-East Asia.

As to future procedure, the Cabinet had already agreed that their formal decision whether or not to apply for membership should be taken at their next meeting in Downing Street. In the light of the discussion he would prepare a short draft statement to Parliament which the Cabinet could consider on Tuesday, 3rd May, and which, if the Cabinet agreed, he would make shortly thereafter. Consideration of this statement would give the Cabinet the opportunity to decide to what extent and in what sense any application should deal with the question of safeguards for our essential interests. It might be convenient to hold a debate in Parliament over three days in the following week. Before the debate a White Paper should be published giving an account of recent events, including the tour by himself and the Foreign Secretary, leading up to the Cabinet's decision. This White Paper would describe the major issues likely to arise in the course of negotiations and the safeguards which we should seek to obtain: it would include the text of his statement to the House of

Commons and a series of annexes which might cover such subjects as agriculture and the legal and constitutional implications of entry into the Community. The draft White Paper should be available during the course of the current week; and the basis of the debate the following week might be a Motion inviting the House to approve the terms of the White Paper. During the Whitsun Recess preparations should be made for the publication of a series of more detailed White Papers, possibly including a further paper on agriculture. The draft booklet on Britain and the EEC prepared by the Department of Economic Affairs (attached to C(67)67) should be further considered but it was possible that it might not be ready for publication before the Recess.

The Cabinet:—

Took note, with approval, of the procedure described in the Prime Minister's summing up of their discussion.

143 PREM 13/1521

21 June 1967

[Wilson and de Gaulle]: outward FO tel 3170 to United Kingdom Mission to UN (New York), transmitting a message from Mr Wilson to Mr Brown about his talks with President de Gaulle in Paris

[Wilson returned to Paris for talks with the French president on 18 June, shortly after the six-day war in the Middle East. Discussions took place at the Grand Trianon, a palace within the Versailles complex. They ranged widely, including an exchange about Rhodesia (PREM 13/1739). On the Middle East de Gaulle welcomed Britain's decision to withdraw from Aden but suggested this alone would not resolve the UK's difficulties in the Middle East. Arab hostility to the Americans for their support of Israel would rub off on Britain by reason of 'the fundamental British link with Washington'. Similarly, while the French government understood and respected British commitments in relation to Hong Kong and Singapore, in times of international tension as viewed from Paris it seemed the UK felt compelled to take sides, always choosing the same side. To the French government this was 'inexplicable', as it brought no benefit to Britain. 'The only realistic solution for Britain, as for France, was to have no external commitments.' Wilson denied that UK actions in the Middle East were dictated by US concern for the preservation of oil supplies. He pointed out that Hong Kong was not a military base. Over Singapore, from where 30,000 troops 'would have come home by next April', he argued a precipitate withdrawal would pose serious economic problems for the Singaporean government. Wilson insisted Britain would make its own decision about withdrawal from South-East Asia—a decision based on our assessment of the economic realities of our position and of our proper role in the world of the '70's' (PREM 13/1456, record of meeting, 19 June 1967). When the prime minister reported his talks to ministers and Healey suggested there now appeared no chance of Britain gaining entry into Europe, Wilson denied this. According to Richard Crossman he insisted his talks with de Gaulle had improved the chances. See *The diaries of a Cabinet minister* Vol Two *Lord president of the Council and leader of the House of Commons 1966–68* (London, 1976) p 392.]

Harold Beeley¹ will have given you an account of the morning discussion about the Middle East. We reverted to this briefly before I left the Trianon yesterday morning. The General was as despondent as before. He saw no prospect of any early accommodation, whether between the United States and Russia or between the Arabs and Israel. And little that Britain and France could do to help. He said that neither he nor Pompidou would be going to New York: he doubted whether Johnson and Kosygin would meet: and the French Government were resigned to a long period of

¹ UK ambassador to the UAR.

international frustration and impotence. I did my best to get him to face up to the responsibilities of a so-called great power. I felt, as he did, that neither he nor I should go to New York, though I was careful not to commit myself irrecoverably to going there only if he did: and, in response to the initiative he himself had taken the previous afternoon about personal contacts, I underlined the desirability of the two of us keeping in close personal touch. In practice, it does not look as if there would be any point in my trying to visit New York for the time being and I am sure it is best that we should play the Assembly on the lines that you and I agreed.

De Gaulle's gloomy apocalyptic mood characterized much of our discussion. He is visibly ageing, not only physically, but also in the sense of being unwilling to contemplate any new thinking: but I think he is still realistic enough to recognise that his own foreign policy, based on his past experiences, prejudices and humiliations, has left France with woefully little world influence. I suspect that his talk with Kosygin last Friday was traumatic. He claimed that the Russians still attached importance to their links with France, but he dismissed Pompidou's forthcoming visit there as purely a courtesy trip. He spoke with some bitterness about Johnson's failure ever to consult or talk to France: but he admitted that France made no effort herself at such consultation and was now quote separated unquote from the United States—as he now seemed to recognise she was also from the Soviet Union. The general theme that ran through the whole discussion was that, as he put it at one point, the United States, which was now the greatest power in the world, behaved (as France and Britain had done in their hey-day) exclusively in her own interests. The only way for a medium sized power like France (or in his view Britain) to conduct their affairs in such a situation was to disengage and quote to make it clear that America's quarrels are not our quarrels and their wars will not be our wars unquote. All this was of course related primarily to Vietnam and the Far Eastern situation and to the danger of world war arising from it. This, he said, was the main reason for France's withdrawal from NATO,² so that she could keep her hands free. Britain's involvement with the United States made it inevitable that we should be dragged into their wars. It also affected us damagingly in such areas as the Middle East where we were now suffering because we were regarded by the Arabs as indistinguishable from the pro-Jewish Americans. I rubbed it into him that, in the thermo-nuclear age, it was unrealistic to think that France could keep out of wars in this way and that, far from being quote disengaged unquote, he and we should try to be jointly quote engaged unquote in a positive exertion of influence designed to avoid the quote eyeball to eyeball unquote situations.

This led on naturally to our European discussion. We had a useful run over the ground on technological and industrial cooperation and on the lesson that political influence is related to economic strength. Here again his constant theme was our involvement with the Americans and the danger that if we came in, all the weaker brethren in the six (quote the poor Italians unquote, the quote poor Belgians unquote, the Germans exposed to constant temptation and the Dutch already on our side anyway) would follow our lead and the whole thing would become an American dominated Atlantic arrangement. It was to prevent this that France was in the Community.

Painted in this way, the picture looks pretty sombre for our prospects. And so, on

² French forces were withdrawn from NATO command in July 1966.

the basis of what he actually said, I suppose it is. But in practice I and those with me believe this to have been a useful visit and I think that I shook him a little out of his complacent gloom. In the broader context I think he was genuinely attracted at the possibility of Britain and France playing a more effective role together in world issues—and particularly over the Middle East: while in the European context he showed unmistakable interest in what I told him about our willingness to cooperate (if we got in) in the advanced technologies and particularly in the civil nuclear field. The fact that we were not buying Poseidon was also a bull point. He accepted that in these major economic and industrial areas we were now becoming increasingly independent of the Americans.

To sum up (and even if it sounds a shade far-fetched) I found myself, watching this lonely old man play an almost regal quote mine host unquote at Trianon, slightly saddened by the obvious sense of failure and, to use his own word, impotence that I believe he now feels. His concept of France's role as he described it is oddly reminiscent of the days of the Maginot Line. There is nothing he can do but sit behind his Force de Frappe and watch the world move towards Armageddon. Against this background I feel paradoxically encouraged. He does not want us in and he will use all the delaying tactics he can (though incidentally the word association was not once mentioned nor anything like it). But if we keep firmly beating at the door and do not falter in our purpose or our resolve I am not sure that he any longer has the strength finally to keep us out—a dangerous prophecy, as prophecy always is with the General. But I thought you should have my personal impression for what it is worth.

Incidentally, since the foregoing was dictated, there has been some talk in the press here of your acting as a kind of go-between to get L.B.J. and Kosygin to meet each other. I naturally hope they will have a talk. But, in the context of our European policy and particularly in the light of my exchanges with the General, I hope that we can avoid seeming to be quote honest brokers unquote for any meeting at the summit at this stage, unless it is to be the four-power summit itself. No doubt you have this point fully in mind.

144 CAB 129/134, C(67)187, Annex A 28 Nov 1967
[Britain and the European Community]: text of President de Gaulle's statement at a press conference on 27 November¹

The following is a complete translation of General de Gaulle's statement on Britain and the Communities:

From the moment when there were men and there were states, any great international plan has rested on seductive myths. That is quite natural since inspiration is always at the origin of action. And so, as regards the unity of Europe, how fine it would be, how good it would be if Europe could become a fraternal whole where each people would find its prosperity and its security. The same is true for the world. How marvellous it would be if all the differences of race, language, ideologies, riches, all the rivalries, frontiers that have divided the earth since the beginning

¹ This statement was annexed to Brown's memo to Cabinet, 'The approach to Europe'.

could disappear. But however attractive dreams are, the realities are there. And it is by following these realities or not that politics can be a fertile art or a vain Utopia. It is in this way that the idea of linking the British Isles to the Economic Community, consisting of the six continental states, gives rise everywhere to wishes which are in theory very justified. But it is a question of knowing whether this could be done at present without tearing up or breaking what exists. For it happens that Great Britain, with an insistence and a haste quite out of the ordinary, and on which perhaps the recent monetary events have thrown a certain light, has proposed the immediate opening of negotiations between herself and the Six with a view to her entering the Common Market. At the same time she has said that she accepts all the dispositions which govern the Community of the Six—which would seem a little contradictory with a request to start negotiations. For why should one negotiate about clauses which have been entirely accepted in advance. In fact we are seeing the fifth act of a drama in the course of which the various attitudes of the United Kingdom with regard to the Common Market have succeeded one another without resembling one another. The first act was the refusal of London to participate in the formulation of the treaty of Rome which, it was thought on the other side of the Channel, would come to nothing. The second act showed the deep hostility of Britain towards the construction of Europe as soon as the latter began to make its appearance. And I can still hear the exhortations, I think I have already mentioned it before, the warning which my friend Mr. Macmillan, then Prime Minister, addressed to me in June 1958 in Paris. He compared the Common Market with the Continental Blockade and threatened to declare against it at least a war of tariffs.

2. The third act was the negotiation at Brussels conducted by Mr. Maudling² for a year and a half. This negotiation was designed to bend the Community to the conditions imposed by Great Britain. It was brought to an end when France made it clear to her partners that this was not the question at issue but precisely the opposite.

3. At the start of Mr. Wilson's Government the fourth act was characterised by a lack of interest in London regarding the Common Market, by the maintenance around Great Britain of the six other European countries which made up the Free Trade Area and by a great effort to tighten the internal links of the Commonwealth. And now unfolds the fifth act in which Great Britain this time puts forward her candidacy and in order that it should be accepted embarks on all the promises and all the pressures imaginable. In fact this attitude can be quite easily explained. The British people no doubt see more and more clearly that in the great movement which is carrying the world forward, before the enormous power of the United States, the growing power of the Soviet Union, the newborn power of the continental countries, the new power of China, and taking into account the more and more centrifugal forces which appear in the Commonwealth, their systems and their habits, her activities and even her national personality are henceforth at stake. And after all, the grave economic, financial, monetary difficulties in whose grip she finds herself make themselves felt day after day. And from there comes a tendency to discover in her own depths a framework, perhaps European, which would allow her, help her to save and to safeguard her own substance, which would allow her to play once again a leading role and which would relieve her of a part of her burden.

² Reginald Maudling, secretary of state for the colonies, 1961–1962; chancellor of the Exchequer, 1962–1964.

4. There is nothing in that which is not salutary for her, and in the long run, there is nothing but satisfaction in that for Europe, provided that the British people, like those whom they wish to join, desire to and know how to bring upon themselves the fundamental changes which would be necessary in order to ensure their own stability. For it is a radical modification and transformation of Britain which is necessary in order that she can join the continentals. This is obvious from the political point of view, but—to speak only of the economic sphere today—the report which the Brussels Commission submitted on the 29th of September to the Governments of the Six shows with the greatest clarity that the present Common Market is incompatible with the economy as it exists at present of Britain, whose chronic balance of payments deficit is proof of permanent disequilibrium, and shows features concerning production, sources of supply, credit policies, working conditions, which she could not alter without transforming her own nature.

5. The Common Market is also incompatible with the manner in which the British provision themselves, as much by their own agricultural produce, very highly subsidised, as by the food products they purchase cheaply throughout the world, notably from the Commonwealth, which makes it impossible for London ever in fact to accept the levies laid down in the Financial Regulation which would be crushing for Britain. The Common Market is, moreover, incompatible with the restrictions laid down by the British concerning the transfer of capital which, by contrast, circulates freely between the Six. The Common Market is incompatible with the state of sterling which has been highlighted again by devaluation, as well as by the loans which preceded and accompanied it. Sterling's condition together with the pound's character as an international currency and the enormous external balances which encumber it, prevent it at present from joining the solid united and secure group which comprises the franc, the mark, the lira, the Belgian franc and the florin. In these conditions, what could be the effect of what is called the entry of Britain into the Common Market? If there was a desire, despite everything, to impose this, it would obviously mean the collapse of a Community which has been constructed by and which functions by rules which do not allow for such a monumental exception. Furthermore, certainly I should add that this Community could not withstand the introduction of a state which precisely by its currency, its economy and its policy does not at present form part of Europe in the sense in which we have begun to practice it.

6. To allow Britain to enter, and by consequence to become involved in a negotiation to that effect now, would be, for the Six—given that everyone knows what this involves—to grant their consent in advance to all the tricks, delays, pretences which would tend to disguise what would be the virtual destruction of an edifice which has been built at the price of so many difficulties and amidst so much hope. It is true that while recognising the impossibility of letting the Britain of today enter the Common Market in its present form, one might all the same wish to sacrifice the Common Market for an agreement with Britain. It is true that, in theory, the economic system which is at present practised by the Six is not necessarily the only one that Europe could practise. One could imagine, for example, a free trade area spreading over the whole of the West of our continent. One could also imagine a sort of multilateral treaty of the kind which emerged from the Kennedy Round, regulating between ten, twelve or fifteen European states their respective reciprocal quotas and tariffs. But in both these cases, one would first have

to abolish the Community and break up its institutions. And I can say that France is certainly not asking for that. However, if one or another of her partners, as is after all their right, should make the proposal, France would examine it with the other signatories of the Rome Treaty.

7. But what she cannot do is to enter at present into a negotiation with the British and their associates which would lead to the destruction of the European structure of which she is a part. Moreover this would not at all be the way to construct a Europe which is building herself by her own effort and for herself in such a way as to avoid dependence on an economic, monetary and political system which is alien to it. In order that Europe may be able to form a counterweight to the immense power of the United States it must at all costs avoid weakening itself and on the contrary must strengthen the bonds and rules of the Community. Indeed those who, like myself, have proved by their action the attachment and the respect which they have for England, hope deeply to see her one day choose and accomplish the immense effort which would transform her. Indeed to help her in these matters France is quite prepared to enter into some arrangement which, under the name of association or some other, would encourage henceforth commercial exchanges between the continentals on the one hand and the British, the Scandinavians and the Irish on the other.

8. It is certainly not in Paris that one is unaware of the psychological evolution which our friends from across the Channel appear to be showing, or that there is failure to recognise the merit of certain measures which they have already taken, or others which are projected in order to achieve equilibrium, their interior equilibrium and their external independence. But for the British Isles really to moor themselves alongside the Continent, a very vast and very deep transformation is still required.

9. Everything depends therefore not on a negotiation which would for the Six be a renunciation tolling the knell of their Community, but on the will and action of the great English people who would make of themselves one of the pillars of European Europe.

145 CAB 128/42/3, CC 69(67)4 30 Nov 1967
**‘Approach to Europe’: Cabinet conclusions on the courses open to
 Britain following the French president’s statement to the press¹**

The Cabinet considered a memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (C (67) 187) on the Approach to Europe.

The Foreign Secretary said that in his memorandum setting out the alternative courses which the Government might pursue in the situation following the statements by the French President (President de Gaulle) at his Press conference on Monday, 27th November, he had not sought to examine the position which would arise if the consideration in December by the Ministerial Council of the European Economic Community (EEC) of our application resulted in the imposition of another French veto. It would be premature to reach conclusions about this latter situation until the results of the EEC’s consideration of our application were known.

¹ See 144.

Meantime, the tactical handling of the immediate situation following the French President's Press conference was important, and the second paragraph of his memorandum set out the four alternative courses open to the Government.² His own choice was the second of these alternatives, namely to urge the Five, in consultations with their representatives prior to the meeting of the Ministerial Council of the EEC on 18th–19th December, to insist on fixing a date in January for the opening of negotiations, and so to force an issue with the French either at that meeting or at a further meeting early in January. Despite what the French President had said at his Press conference, it would be a mistake to take it for granted that the French were in fact prepared formally to veto the opening of negotiations with us on our application for membership of the EEC; and it was important for us to see that this uncertainly was resolved, and for two main reasons.

First, to hold firm the position of the Five who had all been scandalised, but in varying degrees, by the French President's statements at his Press conference. The Italian Minister for Trade and Commerce (Signor Colombo) was particularly incensed, and had attended the meeting of Benelux Ministers on this question the previous day to ensure that a sufficiently firm line was taken; and was following through with a similar visit to Bonn. It was clear that Signor Colombo recognised that whilst he did not of course want an open conflict with the French in December, the line he felt it essential to pursue would in fact involve precisely that. The meeting of the Benelux Ministers had issued a firm statement recording their view that negotiations with Britain on our application for membership of the Community should start without delay. The Foreign Minister of Luxembourg, M. Gregoire, would be visiting London the following day, 1st December, and the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, M. Luns, in the early part of next week. There would also be an opportunity for him to consult privately with the Foreign Ministers of the Five at the meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in the following week. In these consultations he would need not so much to urge the Five to attack the French position, but to ensure that the Five were themselves under no illusion that we were wavering in our application, or were pressing it less vigorously than they were prepared to do. Whilst the German Federal Government was as incensed with the attitude of the French as its partners, their stance was less firm because of the difference of views between the Federal Chancellor, Herr Kiesinger, and his Foreign Minister, Herr Brandt: the latter however had issued a firm statement in Bonn the previous day, 29th November, favouring immediate negotiation between Britain and the Community. If we were in any way to let the Five feel that we were prepared to tolerate much further delay in answering our application, the waverers amongst them would be encouraged to seek alternatives to early negotiations for full membership, and notably to explore the possibilities of associate membership, although it was clear from the French President's Press conference that no such alternative had been formulated. It was therefore in his view essential that we should convince the Five that we stood firmly by our application and sought immediate negotiations on it, and would wish them at the meeting of the EEC Ministerial Council to press this issue to a decision.

² The other courses were: (a) to leave the Six to take their decision without advice from the UK; (c) to continue urging an early decision, without insisting on a January date; (d) to 'let the Five and the French off the hook' by indicating willingness to consider, as alternatives to negotiations for full membership, a form of association or membership by stages, or pre-negotiation discussions.

The second reason for maintaining strong support of our application was the political situation at home. In response to statements as hostile and as malicious as those made about Britain by the French President at his Press conference, it was essential for the credibility and the standing of the Government to insist on our right under the Treaty of Rome to early negotiations for full membership. The longer uncertainty as to the fate of our application persisted, the greater would be the damage to the standing of the Government; and if the delay persisted for some months, the support of our friends abroad and public opinion at home would be lost. The Cabinet should however know that the President of the Board of Trade,³ who could not be present because he was representing Her Majesty's Government at the Ministerial meeting of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris, did not wholly share his views. The President felt that we should say to the Five that we hoped that they would be able to settle our application at their meeting in December, but that we should not press them to do so if they felt this unwise; and that in general we should not press the Five to courses involving extreme conflict with the French and possible disruption of the Community. He himself however considered that it was important to resolve the uncertainties surrounding our application for membership at an early date, and that in so doing we should not in any way prejudice our position—indeed it was clear that we could not let these uncertainties persist indefinitely, possibly until the French President had left the scene. Public opinion would expect the Government to insist on an early clarification of the position, and subject to the outcome of the consultations he would be holding with the Five, we should press them to insist that a decision about negotiations on our application for full membership should be made by the EEC as a whole not later than the early part of January.

The Secretary of State for Defence said that while he strongly supported the Foreign Secretary's proposal to proceed as outlined in paragraph 2 (b) of the memorandum in order to force the issue at an early date, we should recognise that this course was not without its risks. The biggest risk perhaps was that, although President de Gaulle clearly wished to finish the matter now, we could not be sure that he would not be pressed into agreeing to start some sort of negotiations in January which might either drag on interminably or end eventually in a veto: we must not lay ourselves open to a third humiliation of this kind. It was imperative therefore that we should make clear to the Five not only that we wished negotiations to start early in the new year but also that any such negotiations must offer the prospect of a satisfactory conclusion in a reasonable space of time. Meanwhile, we should prepare for the situation which would face us in January if it were then clear that there would be no negotiations. He himself doubted whether there were viable alternative international groupings we might join other than the EEC, though the possibilities of a North Atlantic Free Trade Area (NAFTA) might perhaps merit further consideration. However there were three contingency studies which were now urgently required in the light of the probability that membership of the EEC would not be open to us for some considerable time:—

³ Mr Crosland.

- (i) An examination of the extent to which we would be free over say the next three years to change our policies—political, economic and military—to our own advantage, where hitherto we had been inhibited by the need to avoid disturbing France and other members of the Community.
- (ii) An examination, in a sense somewhat contrary to that proposed in (i) above, of areas—such as technology—where, despite exclusion from the Community, we might still find it advantageous to act in ways which would maintain and develop good relations with the Five or with the Community as a whole.
- (iii) An examination of alternative forms of wider relationships between Western European States other than the extension of membership of the EEC to individual countries of EFTA; including *inter alia* the possibility of a collective relationship between EFTA and the EEC such as had been considered earlier.

He said that the results of the studies he had proposed above should be ready in good time for the Government to decide its attitude and future policy if it became clear early in the new year that there would be no negotiations.

In discussion there was agreement with the Foreign Secretary's proposal that an early termination of the uncertainty of our position *vis-à-vis* the EEC must be sought, on the lines of paragraph 2(b) of C (67) 187. The following points were made:

(a) There were many reasons for ending the present uncertainty as soon as possible. Industry needed to know whether or not to plan on the basis of our exclusion from the Community for some years at least. Our EFTA partners needed to know where they stood: and we needed to consider as a matter of urgency both the future of EFTA itself and of relations between EFTA and the EEC. Australia and other Commonwealth countries, whose preferences were so valuable to us, should also know the position as soon as possible. Unless the present uncertainty were removed by prompt confrontation on the lines proposed by the Foreign Secretary we should lose some of the new export opportunities which had now been provided by devaluation. If we were to be excluded, the Government and industry must be in a position as soon as possible to adapt their industrial policies and export plans accordingly.

(b) It was suggested that there might be some advantage in accepting President de Gaulle's declaration at his Press conference this week for what it was—a veto—rather than press on with procedures under the Treaty of Rome which would lead us nowhere. There were dangers in continuing with what appeared to the British public to be a humiliating exercise. On the other hand, it was urged that our friends among the Five would regard such a capitulation at this juncture as a betrayal which would destroy our standing in Europe for some time to come. Moreover it would amount to a recognition by the United Kingdom that President de Gaulle had the right to speak for the Community as a whole and it would also shake the conviction of the Five, which had only recently fully developed, that our enthusiasm for Europe was genuine. We should therefore encourage the Five to bring the issue to a head as soon as possible, on the lines recommended by the Foreign Secretary, although we should recognise that there would be dangers in pushing the Five to such a confrontation if, as seemed most unlikely at present, they were disinclined for it. It was suggested that there had not been the same emotional reaction at home to the President's Press conference on this occasion as had occurred in 1963 and this was in part due to the

Government's careful conduct of the approach to Europe; it was no humiliation to demand our rights, as we now proposed to do under Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome.

(c) It seemed most unlikely that France would pursue her anti-American and other belligerent policies to a point where the United States Government would seriously consider groupings such as the North American Free Trade Area or the Five would consider breaking up the Community, though they might well go far to delay and inhibit its development. Thus the United Kingdom could not reasonably expect to forge links with either Europe or the United States for some time. Although it still remained the case that we should in the long term be better off within than outside the Community, nevertheless we now had competitive advantages, as a result of devaluation, which we should use to the full. Our immediate aim should be to look to our own interests. No one however could now foresee the consequences of President de Gaulle's recent actions for the future of the Community or indeed on world affairs generally: they might be far-reaching.

The Prime Minister, summing up the discussion, said that the Cabinet agreed with the proposals contained in paragraph 2 (b) of the Foreign Secretary's memorandum. While there should be no petulance, we no longer needed to trim our policies and declarations to avoid giving grounds for offence to President de Gaulle. The French President himself had imposed heavy additional strains on the Community by his recent threat to devalue the French franc in line with the sterling devaluation; by raising the gold scare and by pursuing even more blatantly anti-American policies; and by requesting authority to impose unilateral import quotas on imports of domestic electrical appliances from Italy.

So far as our own application for membership was concerned, the French President had blatantly abused the unanimity rule with the purpose of causing the Community to act in breach of their obligations, under Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome, to negotiate with any European State applying to join. The Dutch and other Governments in the Community might now reasonably take the stand that as the French Government had abused the unanimity rule to make Article 237 inoperative, they proposed to do the same, for example in relation to the re-negotiation of the agricultural finance provisions, which were due in 1969 and also required unanimous agreement, unless the British were by then admitted. While the French President would not change his opinions it was not inconceivable that he might be brought to realise that his obstruction of the will of the rest of the Community would not pay. Meanwhile, it was refreshing to find that the Italian and Benelux Governments had reacted most robustly, although the Federal German Government and particularly the Chancellor, Dr. Kiesinger, seemed reluctant fully to face up to French intransigence. The United Kingdom must meanwhile turn its attention wholeheartedly to strengthening its own position by its own efforts and look to its national interests.

Officials should now provide a study of the consequences of our exclusion from the Community for our future economic, military and other policies on the lines suggested by the Secretary of State for Defence and elaborated in discussion. This study should cover, *inter alia*, agricultural policies; defence, including NATO, WEU, and the offset arrangements for the British Army of the Rhine, as well as defence procurement; and United Kingdom relations with EFTA and EFTA relations with EEC.

The Cabinet:—

- (1) Approved the conclusion reached in C (67) 187.
- (2) Took note that the Prime Minister would arrange for the preparation of a report on the lines indicated in his summing up.⁴

⁴ The report by officials, 'The approach to Europe', circulated to ministers by Sir B Trend on 22 Dec 1967, three days after France formally voted against negotiations for Britain's entry into the EEC (copy at FCO 20/10, no 171A) is not printed in this collection. It concluded Britain would be unable to join the EEC while de Gaulle remained in office. It examined alternative economic groupings the UK might join—an Atlantic free trade area, an extension of Commonwealth links, a more permanent role for EFTA, and a formal trade association between EFTA and the EEC—and argued none could be a substitute for joining the EEC. Entry to the EEC therefore remained the ultimate objective and over the next few years the UK should focus on the 'overriding economic priority—the improvement of the structure of the British economy and of the balance of payments'.

146 FCO 49/254

9 Dec 1969

'The political case for joining the European communities': FCO planning paper

[This paper was circulated to FCO heads of mission, under-secretaries and heads of department. It was approved by FCO ministers but not circulated to other Whitehall departments. Certain passages—para 12 on Germany and para 15 on the US—made it unsuitable for public use but recipients were authorised to draw on it as appropriate to put across the political arguments for UK policies.]

This paper outlines the *political* reasons underlying Britain's determination to join the European Communities and so move towards the creation of a more integrated Europe. It does not attempt to enter into the purely economic arguments or to attack in detail the economic arguments and figures of opponents of H.M. Government's policies. However, it necessarily takes account of economic factors in estimating the likely effect of membership or non-membership on Britain's political and strategic positions in the short and longer term.

Assumptions

2. We consider the following to be reasonable assumptions about developments in the next ten years or so:—

(a) *The Super Powers*

The United States will remain the world's strongest power. The disparity in power between the United States and individual European countries will increase. The super-power dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union is likely to continue and may lead to some specific agreements. The United States will be increasingly preoccupied with domestic concerns and under increasing pressure to cut back on overseas commitments. However increasing United States' investment in Europe and technological predominance may mean that reduced U.S. commitments are matched by increasing U.S. influence. The Soviet Union will be increasingly preoccupied with relations with China, but this will not make it relax its hold on Eastern Europe. On the contrary it will do all it can to maintain the *status quo* and there is unlikely to be a significant change in the next ten years or so. It will remain a Soviet objective to weaken and, if possible, destroy the links

between Western Europe and the United States and to prevent closer integration of Western Europe.

(b) *Western Europe*

Although the E.E.C. has not developed as far as its founders hoped, it is now the dominating factor in Western Europe. De Gaulle's departure¹ has removed a major barrier to its development. Despite the many divisive factors, the fundamental strength of the E.E.C. is the customs union. This should enable it to weather any normal political strains. Moreover there is a fair chance that it will succeed in becoming more cohesive and in extending co-operation into the political field. German economic strength will support the growing confidence which Germany already displays in its relations with the United States, and the Soviet Union. Germany will be the most powerful member of the E.E.C.

(c) *The world economy*

On the economic side it is reasonable to assume that advantages will increasingly flow to the large markets, and that world trade will continue to grow rapidly, even if the very rapid expansion of the past decade is not maintained. There is a fair chance that progress towards freer trade (particularly in manufactured goods) will not receive any major or permanent set-back; and that adequate means for adjusting disequilibria between currencies, and for increasing international liquidity will be devised and put into effect; though the role of sterling as a reserve currency is likely to be reduced further, whether through incorporation in some European system or by other means. In economic terms the dominance of the developed over the developing countries will grow. It will give rise to intensified pressure from the latter for development aid, better terms of trade etc., and so to increased political risk if these material aspirations are not satisfied.

3. A further reasonable assumption is that the choice before Britain is between entry to E.E.C. and trying, almost certainly unsuccessfully, to maintain the present pattern of our international relationships; and that there is no third practicable course.

4. It is against this background that we have to consider H.M.G.'s reasons for seeking to join the three European communities (E.E.C., E.C.S.C. and EURATOM), play a part in the development of a more closely integrated Western Europe and develop closer European association in the defence and political fields.

Principal British foreign policy objectives

5. Very summarily stated, our principal objectives in external policy are:—

the maintenance of our national security; the protection and promotion of our economic interests and the improvement of our balance of payments; the reduction of East-West tension, so far as this can be done without prejudice to our security, and the promotion of conditions of international stability; the strengthening of international organisations in which an effective dialogue can take place on potentially contentious issues; assistance to the economic development of the developing countries and a reduction of North/South tensions.

Her Majesty's Government decided in 1967 to seek entry into the European Communities because this was calculated to serve these general aims.

¹ President de Gaulle resigned in Apr 1969.

6. The economic arguments in terms of short-term balance of payments costs and short-term effects on our cost of living are unfavourable; but the political and economic arguments for entry are much more compelling and become stronger as we consider the longer-term prospects. They can be set out in four categories: the maintenance of our influence, prevention of unsatisfactory development in Europe, a united Europe's ability to achieve common objectives and 'what happens if we stay out.'

The maintenance of influence

7. Britain's ability to pursue with any hope of success the objectives outlined in paragraph 5 above depends on the maintenance of British political and economic strength and influence at its highest possible level. The first argument for entry is that if we enter, this level is likely to be higher than if we remain as we are now. This argument can be developed under various heads.

8. *Maintenance of our security.* Our security over the next ten years will be dominated by three power relationships: U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.; U.S.A. and Western Europe; Western Europe and the Soviet Union. Whether in or out of the European Communities Britain alone will not have a decisive voice in any of these relationships, but she will have a very much greater one in all of them from a base within the European Communities than from her present position. The critical relationship will be with the U.S.A., who for the period in question will retain the final voice in Western security. We enjoy traditional links with Washington, but our influence on American policy decisions is decreasing, although the Americans will probably continue to value their exchange of information and assessments with us. We can arrest, if not reverse, this process of decline if we secure membership of the European Communities. We shall then be members of a very large economic unit of some 250 millions which, even if no great progress in political integration occurs, will be a political factor of the first importance in the international scene and we shall be in a position to exercise a strong voice in the future policy of the European Communities. If, as seems likely, political and defence integration of Western Europe makes progress, the influence of the European Communities, and in consequence British influence, in Washington will be greatly increased. To take one example, it will be very much more difficult for the U.S.A. to disregard British and European views in matters such as strategic arms limitation, which vitally affect European security, but at present are likely to be discussed largely over our heads. *Per contra* if European political integration proceeds and we remain outside the Communities, our losses in terms of influence will be even greater.

9. *Improvement of our trading and economic position.* Here we are at present very vulnerable. Though we are still a major trading nation with world-wide interests, we are highly dependent on imports of food and raw materials and on our exports to pay for them; therefore decisions by our trading partners and competitors affecting international trade and economic relations can vitally affect our strength and standard of living, and the degree to which we can maintain employment. We are more vulnerable in this respect than most of our major competitors; and have a major interest in maintaining orderly and liberal conditions of world trade through e.g. G.A.T.T. and the I.M.F. As a member of the Community we shall have a strong influence on Community policy and thereby (though we shall not always get our way) on the development of world trade along lines according with our interests.

The 1967 negotiations over the Kennedy Round have shown the strength of the E.E.C. even at its present size. If, despite our efforts, world trading conditions became less liberal, we should be members of a trading bloc large enough to maintain its overseas markets and sources of raw materials and foodstuffs. If, however, we remain outside the European Communities, our power to protect our economic and trading interests will be steadily reduced, together with our attractions as a trading partner. The contacts between the East African countries and the Common Market, the negotiations for association for Nigeria, and the pressure on New Zealand and Australia to lower tariff barriers against Japanese manufactures demonstrate some of the difficulties which the U.K. already faces in trying to protect her own export markets. It thus seems likely that many of our remaining preferences in Commonwealth markets will be lost even if we stay outside the Community. We face new preferences against us as third countries, including Commonwealth countries, seek preferential arrangements with the Common Market. In general our bargaining power is likely to decrease. Tariff negotiations and commodity agreements are two of the economic and commercial fields in which this effect will be apparent. In addition if we are excluded from the European Communities, we shall have a smaller share of U.S. investment in Western Europe, though it will of course not dry up altogether.

10. *World monetary system.* As a member of the European Community we shall have a larger share in determining a European approach to world monetary problems. Such an approach would be of major significance for international monetary management. If Britain remains outside the Community, the diminishing rôle of sterling will ensure that our voice in deciding how to establish new ways for financing world trade will be smaller. We shall be increasingly at the receiving rather than the determining end of events. This is not to say that the City of London will not continue to play an important and profitable part in world banking and commerce, e.g. through the Euro-dollar market. It is to say that our governmental and political influence on the international monetary system will be much reduced.

11. *Other fields of external policy.* The same argument applies in other fields of external policy. Working from within the European Community we shall have greater power to ensure that European policy towards Eastern European countries takes desirable lines. In the United Nations our influence will increasingly depend on the extent to which we can work with other like-minded delegations. Our ability to work for the creation of a strong European group will be greatly enhanced by membership of the European Communities. Our trade relations with such 'middle powers' as Australia, Latin America and Canada and with other traditional partners, e.g. in the Middle East, should gain overall rather than lose by our membership of a larger European grouping with its consequent improvement in our economic and technological strength. As regards North/South problems, pressure from the developing countries for greater aid commitments and for preferences seems likely to grow. Our influence in this field will be greater if we are members of a major aid-giving group. If Britain remains outside the Community, she will have less influence than she might on the policies of the developed countries towards the developing countries, which will be largely the result of bargains struck between the United States and the European Community and perhaps Japan. Britain as a member of the Common Market could co-ordinate a policy with her partners and might be able to lead their policy along lines favourable to the U.K. and to the developing world.

Preventing unsatisfactory developments in Europe

12. The second argument for entry is that unless Britain becomes part of a more closely integrated Western Europe, Western Europe may develop in ways contrary to our interests. This is in some respects another form of the loss of influence argument, developed with particular reference to Western Europe; it is, however, sufficiently important to merit special attention. The European Communities exist whether we like it or not and are the most powerful force in Western Europe. The thinking of their members does not always take lines coinciding with British interests. It would, for example, be very unfortunate if the Communities were to develop in a spirit of anti-Americanism; this would put great strains on the unity of the West and offer openings to Soviet wedge-driving; or in a mood of protectionism since it is in our interest to work for more liberal trading conditions; or in a mood of parochialism and lack of interest in the outside world. These risks are present and we cannot guard against them unless we are members. More important is the likelihood that, if we are not members, the European Communities will be dominated by Germany. It is a major U.K. interest that Germany should remain within a political and military framework which, while meeting her legitimate interests, will tie her to the West and contain a counterpoise to her growing power. Without a developing framework of this kind Germany might be tempted to 'cut loose', to develop nationalist policies and to assert equality with other powers, e.g. in the matter of nuclear weapons. Or Germany might be tempted into a separate accommodation with the Soviet Union which would mean the break-up of the Atlantic military and security system. Either way the effects on European stability and so on British interests would be very serious.

United Europe's ability to achieve common objectives

13. The third argument is that British participation in a more closely united Western Europe will greatly facilitate the achievement of certain objectives which are in both British and European interests. These may be rehearsed briefly as follows: building up Europe's economic strength and standards of living; maintaining European security; developing a more satisfactory and equal relationship with the United States; shaping relations with Eastern Europe along desirable lines; and playing a full part elsewhere in particular by assisting the under-developed world.

14. *European economic development.* Britain's entry into the E.E.C. will strengthen the Community and offer it specific advantages, stiffening European research and technology, offering opportunities for greater industrial specialisation, making even greater use of the financial skills and resources of the City of London and offering a wider preferential industrial and agricultural market. Many European problems, social and environmental, including regionalism, may be more easily solved on a Community rather than on a national basis. British entry should lead to greater European cohesion in such matters as monetary policy and attitudes to U.S. investment. European economic strength and purpose will mean a healthier and less resentful attitude towards the United States. It will give Europe greater power to influence economic developments in the world outside, for example the development of more liberal trading policies and possibly the creation of a free trade area between advanced industrial countries. It is now universally accepted that neither Britain alone nor the existing six-member Community constitute a broad enough base on which to develop the necessary research, development and technology which is vital

to the newer industries of today and tomorrow. If a united Europe is to stay in the front rank of modern industrial countries there is no alternative to a pooling of resources through a fully-integrated approach. This will increase the range of activities which can be undertaken economically. While the disadvantages of the present lack of integration can be mitigated by multi-national approaches, the only ultimate solution is a fully integrated one based on a European Company Statute.

15. *Defence and relations with the United States.* The United States Government is exasperated at Europe's failure to meet its common problems, in particular by taking on a larger share of the defence burden. There are growing domestic pressures in the United States to cut down on overseas commitments. The withdrawal of some at least of the U.S. forces in Europe seems almost certain and we may be at the beginning of a slow process of U.S. disengagement, leaving only the nuclear guarantee. On the other side the Soviet Union has shown its determination and capacity to hold down Eastern Europe for a very long time. Its long-term aims to bring Western Europe under Soviet influence remain and can only be encouraged by the continued divisions among Western European countries. At the same time there is a tendency for a super-power dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union to be conducted over Western Europe's head on matters vitally affecting European security. In this situation Western Europe needs its full measure and cohesion in order to prepare for the time when U.S. forces may be withdrawn; to deny opportunities for the spread of Soviet influence; and to bring as much influence as possible on the super-powers to ensure that European interests are not neglected. Britain's entry into the E.E.C. would not only strengthen the Community, as explained above, thereby giving it greater political weight. It would repair what is at present a potentially dangerous political division in Western Europe. It would also give an impetus to advances in European political and defence integration, particularly if we give a lead, thereby simultaneously making provision against the day when U.S. forces may be withdrawn and increasing European leverage in Washington. There are signs that as the possibility of enlargement of the Communities comes closer U.S. attitudes may in some respects be rather cooler. The prospect of the emergence of a rival economic and commercial grouping may well make U.S. attitudes increasingly ambivalent. But we believe that we can convince the U.S. in advance of enlargement that the political and defence advantages of European integration outweigh any economic or commercial disadvantages. And once enlargement has occurred they will have no alternative to accepting Europe's increased influence.

16. *East/West relations.* As regards the effect on East/West relations, it is true that elements in several Eastern European countries will be discouraged by the creation of a unified Western Europe. But there is no evidence that Soviet attitudes to Soviet interests in Eastern Europe will be materially changed by Western Europe renouncing, unilaterally or as part of an attempted bargain with the Soviet Union, the possibility of closer Western European unity. On the contrary, it seems likely that disunity, or a voluntary refusal to unite would encourage the Soviet Union to attempt to increase their influence in Western Europe. The result would be to sharpen the tension that exists in Central Europe.

17. Conditions for a satisfactory European security settlement will have to include profound changes in the Soviet attitude towards Germany. This will take a very long time. In the meantime the building up of a strong Western Europe will

serve to contain Soviet hopes of wedge-driving, and to reduce Soviet fears of a revived nationalist threat from Germany. The more Germany is integrated with Western Europe the less it will be able to play an independent role in Eastern Europe. In the long run a European security settlement probably presupposes some form of European structure in between the two super-powers and guaranteed by them. From our point of view an acceptable and advantageous outcome might be that the Western European grouping should be the kernel of this structure, with other European states including the neutral and Eastern European countries associated with it in some way or other.

18. In brief there is no reason why we should allow hopes of improved East/West relations to hold up our attempts to secure a closer Western European grouping, given the wider political and economic advantages we attach to this. And there is reason to believe that a closer Western European grouping of this sort may in the long run contribute to improving the prospects for a European security settlement.

19. *The rest of the world.* An integrated Western Europe will improve the chances of achieving closer co-ordination on a wide range of political issues with Japan, Australia, Canada, the large Latin American countries and other middle powers. Britain's Commonwealth links will contribute to this. As regards the Third World, the present situation is of a growing gap between the wealth of the developed and the under-developed world, of sharpening frustration on the part of the latter at their failure to make rapid material progress, and of consequent growing political risk. European countries have a common interest in hastening economic progress among the under-developed countries because such progress, among $\frac{2}{3}$ of the world's population, would be a powerful force in the expansion of the world economy and would redound to Europe's benefit; because Europe cannot be insulated from quarrels in less-developed countries; and finally because international political stability requires a more equal distribution of the world's wealth. Strengthened by Britain's entry and to some degree under the influence of British experience, Western Europe as the world's largest trading area and a rich source of skills and finance could increase the assistance at present given to the Third World by a co-ordinated aid programme and in particular improved terms of aid, by technical training and by adopting a more liberal trade policy.

What happens if we stay out?

20. So far the arguments have been first that British entry would maximise British influence to be used in pursuit of our foreign policy objectives; secondly, that without Britain as a member the European Communities and Western Europe could develop along lines prejudicial to our interests; thirdly, that a united Europe with Britain as a member is a necessity if common European interests are to be served. At this point it may be helpful to look at the other side of the coin and attempt an estimate of our position if we remain outside the E.E.C. Our situation would be one of markedly declining strength, particularly if we consider the position at the end of the decade under review. For security we should continue to depend upon NATO and the U.S. nuclear guarantee. We should, however, retain little influence in Washington, merely the ghost of a special relationship. Washington/Bonn relations, and even Washington/Paris relations, would be more important. If the European Communities move from economic to political integration this loss of influence would be even more striking since we would have no voice in a dialogue between a

European political entity of some 200 million and the United States. If, on the other hand, our exclusion hamstrung the European political integration, we should suffer, as would other European countries, from the continued divisions and relative political and military impotence of Europe. The misfortune would be that as non-members of the E.E.C. we would have a stake in preventing political development of the Community and thereby in keeping Europe divided.

21. In the economic field we should be increasingly vulnerable. We would remain in the EFTA (if EFTA survived) but EFTA is no match for E.E.C. The E.E.C. is enormously more powerful than we are and even individual members of it, e.g. France and Germany, are in some respects stronger than Britain and growing faster (see Annex).² For various reasons U.K. bargaining power would decrease. The longer our membership is deferred the less attractive we shall appear to our partners, especially as our present technological advantages may diminish. Tariff barriers to world trade might remain low, though they would be decided by bargains in which we would have little say. In any event, our exports would have to face the variety of non-tariff barriers existing within the large markets. As explained above, we would probably face the loss of our Commonwealth preferences and conceivably the creation of new preferences against us. It would be fallacious to suppose that we could turn ourselves into a country like Sweden, cultivating our garden and turning our back on much of world politics. The Swedes have a small population, a large country and a small number of highly specialist industries. Britain could not adopt this position. We should still need to protect ourselves and our interests but we should be on the margin of events and increasingly less able to do so.

22. It may be suggested that Japan offers an encouraging model for our situation if we do not join the European Communities, since Japan too has a dense population and few raw materials and is vitally dependent on trade. But the parallel is misleading. Japan's astonishing growth has taken place in the context of a constitution that forbids use of Japanese forces outside Japanese territory, a still enormous surplus of agricultural labour, and a population twice our size, quite apart from profoundly different social and historical conditions. For a variety of reasons we do not have the leverage with the U.S.A. which Japan has.

23. There is no doubt that the U.K. could survive outside the E.E.C.; and, barring a major breakdown in present world trading and monetary arrangements, could continue to maintain an increase in its standard of living (see Annex). But it would, of course, have to adapt itself to a situation in which a range of opportunities was closed, and in which the full implications of a reduction in its ability to influence economic events became evident.

² Not printed.

CHAPTER 6

United Nations

Document numbers 147–152

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6 Jan 1966

‘The United Nations and colonies’: minute by Sir H Poynton to Mr Greenwood. *Annex*

I promised to let you have a note of my ‘philosophy’ regarding the United Nations and colonies.¹ I now attach such a note. It is not intended as a statement of official policy by the Permanent Secretary, but rather as a personal creed, though I think the views which I have expressed in it would be shared very widely, though not necessarily universally, by the rest of the Department. Having been myself largely responsible for evolving this philosophy and I hope, knocking a little logic into the problem of the international aspects of colonial policy, you can readily understand why I find proposals for further involving the United Nations in our colonial affairs, so distasteful, particularly in what must at best be the last few months of my official career when I am already over the retiring age.

2. I think the real difficulty arises from the fact that our delegation in New York is, so to speak, a mouthpiece of the F.O. and tends to look at these matters in terms of international tactics and ‘imagemanship’ without regard to the effect of their words and actions upon our responsibilities in the Colonial Office. We on the other hand, have to look at these matters in relation to colonial policy as such. I do not think it is right that this should become a sort of international football to be kicked about by foreign delegates with no responsibility.

Annex to 147

The United Nations Charter contains three chapters devoted to dependent territories. The primary purpose of having any provision at all on this subject was to create the International Trusteeship System as a successor to the League of Nations Mandate System. Chapter XII prescribes the system and Chapter XIII deals with the composition of the Trusteeship Council. It was, however, recognised that there would be a great many dependent territories which would not be placed under the International Trusteeship System and, therefore, a separate chapter, which became Chapter XI was included to cover such territories. It is noteworthy that this chapter is entitled ‘Declaration Regarding Non-Self-governing Territories’. In it the Colonial

¹ At San Francisco in 1945 Poynton played a significant role in the drafting of those chapters of the UN Charter that dealt with non-self-governing territories.

powers undertook, among other things, to develop self-government, to take account of the political aspirations of the peoples and to assist them in the progressive development of their free political institutions according to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and their varying stages of advancement; but whereas the International Trusteeship System provided for full accountability to the United Nations with annual reports and with the right for the United Nations to send visiting missions and receive petitions, Chapter XI does not provide for such accountability. The only specific undertaking to the United Nations is to transmit regularly to the Secretary-General for information purposes, subject to such limitation as security and constitutional considerations may require, statistical and other information of a technical nature relating to economic, social and educational conditions in the territories. It is perhaps noteworthy that whereas 'independence' is stated as one of the objectives of the Trusteeship System, the word 'independence' does not occur in Chapter XI at all. There was a move by one delegation at San Francisco—as far as I remember it was the Philippines—to include independence as the objective in Chapter XI but this was defeated on the grounds that it was not reasonable to expect colonial powers to bind themselves by an international treaty to give up territory under their own sovereignty.

2. Furthermore, and perfectly consistently with the above, a motion to add 'political and constitutional' conditions to the list of subjects on which information was to be transmitted to the Secretary-General was also defeated. We can therefore say quite categorically that when the Charter was written there was no intention whatever of the United Nations intervening, or indeed, interesting themselves in the constitutional evolution of colonial territories.

3. Nevertheless, almost immediately after the United Nations came into existence political pressures began to develop in the Fourth Committee² to require the Colonial powers to transmit information on political and constitutional conditions. We resisted this, quite rightly in my opinion, and fully in harmony with our obligations under the Charter, for about sixteen years. Then in about 1961, Mr. Macleod, who was then Secretary of State, advised by Sir Hugh Foot, as he then was, against my advice decided to surrender this very important point of principle. Since then therefore we have, as a voluntary act, supplied political and constitutional information to the Secretary-General in addition to the material on economic, social and educational conditions which we are obliged by the Charter to supply. Moreover, the idea that this material was transmitted for 'information purposes' very soon began to get eroded by the setting up of committees to study the information; from which started a whole series of resolutions and recommendations which go far beyond anything that was originally contemplated when we signed the Charter.

4. The surrender on the issue of political information was recommended by Sir Hugh Foot on the grounds that it would be a forthcoming gesture and would greatly ease our difficulties which were already becoming great in fending off United Nations' interference. In fact (as I warned at the time) it has not had this effect at all. Indeed, the United Nations have intensified their attempts to arrogate to themselves a right of intervention in colonial affairs and by our voluntary act of transmitting information on political and constitutional conditions we have unfortunately implied that we recognise their right to do so. I myself would never admit this.

² The Fourth Committee was the Trusteeship Committee.

5. Against this background I have always held that the series of United Nations resolutions about granting immediate independence to colonies, or the attempts to lay down conditions which the United Nations would accept as satisfying the requirements of full self-government, have no real validity under the Charter and [are] certainly not binding on us. I myself go further than this and have always held that it was a great mistake for Britain to accept a seat on the Committee of Twenty-Four³ (originally Seventeen) whose activities I regard as a disgraceful example of unwarranted international meddling. We have now got ourselves into the thoroughly undignified position of having to be cross-examined by a kind of international Public Accounts Committee on any and every aspect of our colonial administration and this is resented by most colonies as much as by the Colonial Office. Whatever merits there may have been in the so-called doctrine of 'international accountability' it was clearly strongest when rule by the Colonial Power was most direct and bureaucratic; but the case for it progressively decreases as colonies become more and more self-governing, for the simple reason that what is brought under international scrutiny is not the acts of the British Government but the acts of the local governments themselves. Yet the object of constitutional advance in colonial territories should be, among other things, to remove the inferiority complex which stems from the feeling that they are inferior territories. This persistent international meddling has exactly the opposite effect. Moreover, the United Nations has now become a forum for dissident elements in colonial territories to petition to the United Nations against the actions and policies of their own elected governments just as much as against the actions of Britain. Although one cannot stop it I believe this is a thoroughly unhealthy development.

6. I have, I hope, shown in the preceding paragraphs that it was never the intention of the United Nations Charter to bring political and constitutional matters under the scrutiny of the United Nations at all. But this constitutional relationship with Britain is the only aspect of colonial administration which is essentially colonial. Apart from this the problems of public administration in colonies are the problems of public administration in any country whatever its constitutional status. They are all, in the last resort, tracts of land inhabited by human beings trying to lead an orderly community life under the rule of law. If you analyse public administration you will find that its subjects fall into three categories:—

- (1) Subjects where the actions of one country may have a direct impact on the interests of other countries. These, for convenience, I call interlocking problems. Perhaps economic policy is the most obvious illustration—tariffs, quota restrictions, export subsidies, and so forth.
- (2) Subjects where, although the actions of one country do not affect the interests of others, nevertheless there is scope for international co-operation in what may be termed 'parallel problems' and scope for setting general standards of conduct and policy.
- (3) Domestic matters which are of no concern to other countries at all, e.g. whether one has two Houses of Parliament or only one, particulars of the franchise, the period of Parliament, and a whole lot of detailed domestic day-to-day administration.

³ The Committee of 24 was a 'Special Committee on Colonialism', originally established with 17 members in 1961. The original members were the UK, US, Italy, Australia, Tanganyika, India, Uruguay, Venezuela, USSR, Poland, Yugoslavia, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mali, Syria and Tunisia. Seven new members were added in 1962: Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Iraq, Iran, Chile, Bulgaria, and Denmark.

7. It is clear that there is scope for international action in regard to category (1) and also, though perhaps in a rather different form, in regard to category (2). What is quite wrong is to assume that these problems require international scrutiny when they manifest themselves in colonies but not when they manifest themselves in independent countries. To take an example from category (1), if quantitative restrictions are regarded as a hindrance to international trade they are just as much a hindrance when practised by a sovereign independent country as when practised by a colonial government. Similarly, in category (2) if, for example, forced labour is considered to be wrong then it is just as wrong when practised in an independent country as when practised in a colony. Moreover, in this context of setting international standards and bringing moral pressure to bear on the laggards, it is quite wrong to assume that the colonial territories are always the laggards. Indeed, in many spheres, broadly covered by 'human rights', a sound colonial administration, ultimately accountable to Parliament here, probably provides much better standards of administration than immature self-government.

8. I do not want you to assume from this that I am arguing that colonial administration should be exempted from international scrutiny. That has never been my view. What I do inveigh against is the theory that colonial administration alone should be subject to measures of international scrutiny while sovereign territories insist on remaining exempt in the same field of administration. The right approach to my mind is a functional one. Consider to what extent a particular subject lends itself to international treatment, and of what kind, and then try to get a multilateral convention drawn up and applied as widely as possible throughout the world wherever the relevant conditions obtain, sovereign countries and colonies alike. Then, incidentally, you could get some comparative judgment to see how conditions in colonies compared with conditions in other countries. As it is the whole force of international criticism tends to get directed at colonies simply because they are colonies, while our critics bask in the sun behind the barrier of their sovereignty exempt from similar scrutiny. But just as an independent country is free to make up its own mind whether it wishes to accept the provisions of an international convention, so too the governments of colonial territories must be consulted before Britain imposes these requirements upon them. Many of the matters dealt with in international conventions are not questions of international relations as such but are matters of internal administration which are already the responsibility of colonial governments—particularly the type of matter referred to in my category (2).

9. I hope therefore we shall staunchly resist any attempts, whether from Lord Caradon or elsewhere, to 'involve' the United Nations in our colonial affairs. I do not believe we have anything to gain and frankly I do not think that the United Nations on this subject is at all objective. There is I fear a great deal of intellectual dishonesty and indeed hypocrisy in the Committee of Twenty-Four and in the Fourth Committee itself. I am afraid I am sufficiently cynical to believe that they are not in the least interested in the well-being of the inhabitants of colonial territories. They are merely trying to seek international kudos as the champions of 'freedom' for the purpose of embarrassing Great Britain and undermining our influence in the world.

10. I know that many people think these views reactionary; but whether it is a bad thing to be reactionary depends on what you are reactionary against. I myself believe that the philosophy I have set out above is logical, consistent and far more in

tune with the aspirations of colonial peoples today than the archaic doctrine of international accountability.

11. May I just add one tailpiece? The United Nations consistently confuse 'independence' with 'freedom'. While I would not wish to become the slave of my own vocabulary, there are here two very different conceptions for which different terms are desirable. There is the status of a territory in relation to other territories—for which the terms 'dependent' and 'independent' are useful. There is the status of the individual in relation to his own government—civil liberties, human rights, fundamental freedoms, call them what you will. Colonial status is not incompatible with a full guarantee of civil liberties. Why, indeed, do we take such very great care at independence conferences to write into the independence constitutions the strongest possible safeguards for civil liberties and human rights? Precisely because we know that they are likely to be eroded as soon as independence comes.

148 FCO 58/305, no 1

11 Dec 1967

'Committee of 24': letter from Lord Caradon to Mr Roberts on whether Britain should continue to serve on the Committee of 24 at the UN. *Annexes*

For some time past we have had it in mind that at the end of this session we should look again at the question whether we should continue to serve on the Committee of 24. I had understood that when the session was over we would first of all review the arguments for and against continuing to serve on the Committee with the Americans and the Australians and then come to our conclusion before the Committee starts work next year in February.

I now want to report what has happened in the past week and then to go on to make my recommendation for the future. I might say right away that, although there are strong arguments for withdrawing from the Committee, my recommendation is that we should continue to serve on it.

A few days ago we learned that a decision had come from Washington to the United States Mission here in favour of the United States withdrawing from the Committee. Goldberg¹ asked to see me and he stated the arguments in favour of withdrawing. The Committee was being used as an instrument to attack the United States Government. It had been largely captured by the radical elements amongst the Afro-Asians and instead of being used for its proper purposes of encouraging and facilitating decolonisation it was being turned into a vehicle for vituperous attacks, principally on Western powers. Goldberg thought that it was best that the United States and the United Kingdom and Australia should act together in this, and he also thought that it would be well to reach a conclusion before the end of this session, so that the President could decide on replacements on the Committee soon after the mandate of the Committee is renewed (as it no doubt will be during the next week).

I then had a discussion with Ambassador Patrick Shaw (Australia) who had discussed the matter with the United States Mission. He said that he himself still had an open mind on this although for some time past he had felt that there was no

¹ A J Goldberg, US ambassador to UN, 1965–1968.

benefit to Australia in remaining on the Committee. Indeed Australia had continued to serve on the Committee partly to be a help to the United Kingdom. A secondary argument in his mind was that it might be easier for Australia to retain its position regarding the Trusteeship Council if Australia had withdrawn from the Committee of 24 (the argument being that Australia was prepared to discuss New Guinea in the Trusteeship Council but had no cause to do so in the Committee of 24 as well).

Though the Australian Government has not taken a decision, I am inclined to think that if the United States does withdraw Australia will wish to do the same.

So the question we have to consider is whether we shall continue to serve on the Committee although the expectation is that both the United States and Australia will decide not to do so.

We have had very full discussions amongst ourselves here in this Mission and the majority opinion is that, on balance, we too should withdraw from the Committee. After our discussions I asked my people to set out the arguments for and against and I enclose at A a summary which they have put down. I think this is a very fair statement.

Now let me try to set out the arguments which have weighed with me in deciding to recommend that in spite of the likelihood of American and Australian withdrawal the United Kingdom should continue to serve on the Committee.

Before embarking on this I think I might say that American and Australian withdrawal would not in itself influence me against continuing to serve on the Committee. Rather the contrary. I think that it would be a very bad thing if there were a simultaneous Western walk-out. It is true that the Americans and the Australians have given us valuable help and support in the Committee, and we are grateful to them for it. If they leave and we stay we shall be more isolated on many issues, but it is possible to hope that the attacks on us might be somewhat diminished.

I have been in this game for a long time. When I first came to this Mission in 1961 I was sent here specially to deal with trusteeship and colonial questions. We had to face strong Afro-Asian attack then and the attack has been sustained ever since. But now that we have come most of the way in the conversion of our Empire into a Commonwealth I should hate to turn to a policy of non-cooperation when we are so near the end. We have stood our ground for many years and stated our case and answered back when attacks have been made. I should like to see this thing through.

When I came back in 1964 to take charge of the Mission I had some hand in drafting my own instructions and the section of the instructions dealing with colonial questions is set out in the enclosure to this letter at B (they were enclosed with the Secretary of State's despatch of 8 January, 1965). You will see from those instructions that we well understood that we would continue to be subject to persistent, often ill-informed and sometimes malicious attacks. But we decided then, with no illusions, that there was nothing to be gained by refusing to justify our policies in the Committee or anywhere else. I still have no reason to quarrel with the instructions which I then received.

I suggest that we cannot continue to maintain that we seek to strengthen and support the United Nations and at the same time refuse to cooperate with a United Nations Committee, however misguided some of its conclusions may be, which is dealing with matters of special concern to us. Certainly we should answer back and state our case, but I do not believe in walking out or running away; if we do, we leave

the field open to our critics and our enemies who will certainly not be deterred from attacking us by our absence. And once we start on the slope of non-cooperation it is difficult to stop. And anyhow I think it goes against the whole purpose of our work here—to persist in the search for common ground of agreement—if we react to attack or criticism by refusing to cooperate or even to continue discussion.

When the Secretary of State spoke to the General Assembly this year he stated our strong objections to a number of the conclusions reached by the Committee. I am sure that it was right to do so, and we should not hesitate to criticise the Committee when necessary in the strongest terms. I hope to do so again this week. It seems to me better that we should do this in the Committee rather than from outside it. Moreover the Fourth Committee will usually follow the lead given by the Committee of 24 and our position in the Fourth Committee will be much weakened if we have refused to cooperate with the Committee of 24.

Our job here is not to widen the gap between the Afro-Asians and the West but to work persistently, in spite of all setbacks and discouragements, to increase understanding and cooperation with them. We cannot hope to make progress in that direction if we refuse to take part in Committees because we dislike or disagree with the views they express.

Therefore, on grounds of general policy in regard to the United Nations, I myself feel strongly that we should not set out on a road of non-participation and non-cooperation, and I very much hope that the Secretary of State will agree with my view.

We are called upon to make an important decision and I do not wish to rush it unduly. I do agree, however, with the Americans that it would be best to reach our conclusion before this session ends. I greatly hope therefore that you will be able to tell me very soon that the Secretary of State can accept the recommendation which I have made.

I am very conscious that in the pressure of our immediate tasks here I have not argued the case I wish to put as well as I would have wished. I am bound to say too that my strong recommendation is based to some extent on instinct rather than any argument of obvious immediate advantage. It is, however, my very definite conclusion that I would not wish to preside over a policy of non-cooperation even with the wildest men amongst the Afro-Asians. Indeed with an eye to longer term aims I believe that we should seek understanding and cooperation with them as much as anyone.

Since writing this I have seen Hayman's letter of 8 December to Leslie Glass.² I shall be ready if you wish to leave this over for discussion in London next month. But I still hope we can decide now.

Annex A to 148

The issue

The issue is whether or not we should continue to be represented on and participate in the work of the Committee of 24.

2. There is no suggestion that we should change our policy of explaining and justifying our colonial policies to the Fourth Committee at each Annual General Assembly or that we should cease to supply information on our territories under Article 73(e).

² Ambassador and deputy permanent representative to UN, 1967–1969.

The arguments for remaining on the Committee of 24

3. (a) It is our policy to co-operate in the work of the United Nations' Committees wherever we can. We should not withdraw from a Committee simply because we do not like the conclusions it reaches or because the discussions in it are critical of our policies. We were aware of the attitude which the Committee would adopt when we took the decision to join it.

(b) The Committee is a forum for discussion with the Afro-Asians on the future of our colonial territories. We should not give the impression that like South Africa and Portugal we are withdrawing from co-operation with the UN on colonial and African issues.

(c) It is in our interest to seek to secure international recognition and endorsement of decolonisation solutions for our smaller territories since such endorsement, if we could obtain it, would mean the end of UN discussion of the affairs of such territories.

(d) The Committee will continue whether or not we continue to be represented on it. We should not leave the field free for the extremists and communists on the Committee, and for our opponents on special colonial issues (Spain, Argentina and Guatemala). If we remain on the Committee we can answer criticisms, correct mis-statements and keep the record straight at the time and on the spot.

(e) We have admitted that the international community has a legitimate interest in how we carry out our colonial responsibilities. However imperfect an organisation it may be the Committee of 24 is the chosen UN instrument in this field. We have a good record of decolonisation, and intend to deal equally responsibly with our remaining colonial territories. If we remain on the Committee we can defend our record and explain constructively our future policies.

(f) Although the resolutions passed this year by the Committee of 24 are discouraging we have in practice made some progress in convincing some of its members to face up to the realities of colonial problems and in persuading them to accept that not all colonial problems are quickly and easily solved. We shall discourage the moderates on whom we have been working for so long if we leave the Committee and tempt them to throw their hands in with the extremists. Moreover in some cases the criticism directed against us in the Committee has had a constructive effect on our own policies, even if we are reluctant to admit it.

Arguments for leaving the Committee

4. (a) The problems facing the world today are changing and the UN will not be able to respond to them unless it is prepared to shift its resources to keep pace with such change. Apart from the Portuguese territories and the special case of Southern Rhodesia which is dealt with in the Security Council, there are few continuing colonial problems left, certainly not enough to justify a Committee sitting continuously throughout the year making an enormous call on the resources of the Secretariat and our own delegation. We should now devote our limited resources to the newer and more challenging tasks facing the organisation.

(b) The work of the Committee of 24 overlaps that of many other committees (the Security Council on Rhodesia, the Council on South West Africa on that issue and the Committee on Apartheid on South Africa). In addition it is turning its attention to problems on which we do not intend to co-operate (e.g. Oman) or to subjects of prime interest to the communist delegations (e.g. attacks on foreign economic interests).

(c) We suffer much abuse and gain little credit for remaining on the Committee. In spite of all the effort we devote to it, its resolutions are consistently at worst hostile or at best unacceptable to us. Where we have sought to co-operate (e.g. on the Aden Mission) this has not been a success. We are unlikely to change our policy of refusing to accept visiting missions and thus will be constantly accused of lack of willingness to co-operate and gain no credit for what we consider to have been a positive policy of co-operation.

(d) The Committee is largely run as a private preserve by some of the more radical and doctrinaire elements who have lost sight of the Committee's original and proper purpose. The administering powers are treated as if they were automatically in the dock. The Committee has shown extreme bias as on the issue of petitions. It is thus unlikely to make any constructive contribution to the discussion of the future of our remaining colonial territories.

(e) If we leave the Committee we could make clear that we were not ceasing to co-operate with the UN on colonial matters. We should continue to offer a full explanation of our policies during the debates in the Fourth Committee, and in the Security Council on African issues. We should merely be saying that we consider it a waste of time and resources to rehash all the remaining colonial issues twice a year (i.e. in the Committee of 24 and then again in the Fourth Committee).

(f) Because of the reduction in the number of colonial territories the Committee of 24 is not in fact as important as it used to be in Afro-Asian eyes. No other delegation devotes the resources which we do to it and many of the Afro-Asians are normally represented by quite junior members of their delegations (often by First or Second Secretaries). Its affairs are nevertheless a constant source of controversy with the countries represented on it.

Should we cease to be a member of the Committee but attend meetings on our own territories?

5. For us to cease to be a member of the Committee but attend meetings on our own territories would give us the worst of both worlds. We should suffer all the disadvantages of membership without even the right to vote and, on the assumption that the United States and Australia would have left the Committee with us, our only firm supporters on the Committee would not be there to help us.

Annex B to 148: Extract from the minister of state's directive

The persistent, often ill-informed and sometimes malicious attacks on our position in our remaining colonial territories will continue. We are under no illusion that the attacks can be stopped whatever we do or say, but there is nothing to be gained by refusing to justify our policies.

We should proudly defend our record, and at the same time welcome interest in the difficult and divergent problems we face in our remaining scattered colonial territories. We should make it quite plain that we shall not shirk or share our responsibilities, but we should:—

(i) affirm our determination to work with the peoples of the remaining colonial territories (with certain exceptions e.g. Hong Kong) to achieve self-government, self-determination and independence with all possible speed;

- (ii) reaffirm that in pursuing this course we shall endeavour to give the peoples concerned the best possible start in independence (not forgetting the need for (1) consultations and agreement, (2) peaceful transition, (3) economic assistance, and (4) protection of democratic principles and minority rights).

We should accordingly continue to take a full part in the work of the Committee of 24 and the Fourth Committee, providing full information, welcoming discussion and answering criticism.

Where we cannot accept resolutions we should patiently explain our reasons and where possible, having reserved our position, abstain on the vote, keeping our ammunition for occasional counter-attacks when particularly stupid or vicious attacks have been made. When we do hit back we should hit hard.

We cannot check or moderate the resolutions now coming daily from the Committee of 24, but when the Committee has finished its present session (later this month) we should review the whole field and search for new initiatives which might, by encouraging UN interest and participation, have the gradual effect of winning more understanding, and of taking the sting out of the attacks.

In this search we should not exclude in advance any new initiative. In some territories a UN presence might be welcomed, or even a UN visiting mission. There may possibly be some territories or areas (e.g. the Southern African Territories or the Caribbean) where some new form of UN interest or intervention might be found to our advantage.

149 FCO 60/20, no 16

8 Feb 1968

[Committee of 24]: letter from Mr Thomson to Mr Brown arguing on balance that Britain should withdraw but accepting the committee might be given 'a further try'

I expect Goronwy Roberts will have told you of the talk we had on Tuesday 30 January about participation in the Committee of 24. The issues are exceedingly complex and I have been giving anxious thought to the whole question in the light of my knowledge of Hugh Caradon's deeply held convictions and of the views put forward so persuasively by Goronwy Roberts at our meeting.

As you know from the past I start from a strong pre-disposition to cooperate with the United Nations, to build up its authority and to encourage it to develop away from its present dogmatic anti-Colonialism. I have always argued that we should be ready to show a good deal of masochism to achieve these purposes. But there are limits to the damage we should be prepared to suffer as a result of U.N. agitation over territories where we have—and will continue to have—direct responsibility for the welfare of the inhabitants. These limits are now being reached. I think my own view is very close to the one you expressed in your General Assembly speech last September. Unfortunately subsequent resolutions of the Committee of 24 show how unwilling they are to accept any advice to act with some restraint and sense of fairness. I am of course deeply concerned, as Hugh Caradon is, to avoid getting more at loggerheads with the Afro-Asians over 'decolonisation'. But after thinking this over again I do not find these factors overriding any longer in considering our participation in the Committee of 24.

The general question of our relations with the other members of the Committee is,

of course, for you rather than for me, but so far as the Commonwealth interest is concerned I think that our continued participation in the Committee is producing ill-will rather than goodwill. Our experience of the Committee has been bitter and humiliating and no real attempt has ever been made to understand our problems. Even the more moderate members of the Committee, though they often appreciate our point of view, feel obliged to vote with the extremists whatever the merits of the case. A glance at the Committee's instructions for 1968 as laid down by the General Assembly (mainly in Resolution 2326) shows what we have to expect this year. This takes us right back to Resolution 1514 (XV)¹ and requests the Committee to recommend deadline dates for complete independence for all the remaining dependent territories, irrespective of their size or wishes. The 'Study of military activities and arrangements by Colonial Powers' and the 'activities of foreign economic and other interests' reflect strong communist influence and the new proposal for a conference of colonial peoples in 1969 is certain to raise very serious problems for us. If we stay on the Committee we shall not be able to cooperate with them on such a programme and we shall have to say 'no' repeatedly as we have so often done in the past. We shall therefore continue to be under constant attack and the apparent defeats we shall suffer in the Committee will, I am sure, continue to be harmful to our image internationally.

However this may be, I am naturally most concerned with the difficulties which our continued membership of the Committee causes in our dependent territories. We have now come practically to the end of our programme of decolonisation and we shall soon be left with territories too small and unviable to achieve independence and with a limited number of extremely difficult and delicate questions—the disputed territories of Gibraltar, Falklands, British Honduras, Fiji with its deep racial problem, Hong Kong and New Hebrides. Each needs individual handling and we must keep clear the line of our own authority and responsibility.

Our continued presence in the Committee of 24 erodes our authority and confuses responsibilities. In Fiji,² for example, the influence of the Committee is towards polarisation of political and racial difficulties and the opposition party there have decided to withdraw from the Legislature and pursue their ends through the Committee of 24 instead. The Chief Minister, Ratu Mara, and his colleagues cannot understand why we continue to stay in the Committee and so give it standing. Not unnaturally they regard our continual defeats in the Committee as defeats for them and as undermining their authority within the Colony.

Our experience over Gibraltar has been particularly frustrating and has shown that 'decolonisation' in any particular case means what the majority in the Committee decide it should mean. As you know Malcolm Shepherd³ is in Gibraltar now. I have received a telegram saying: 'It is already clear that our task here in the constitutional talks will be considerably facilitated by a decision to leave the Committee of 24, on which many thoughts here are still morbidly fixed'.

In the wider Commonwealth context we have consulted our High Commissioners in Afro-Asian and Caribbean posts about the effect of our possible withdrawal from the Committee on our relations with the governments to which they are accredited. Their replies are generally that our withdrawal would have little or no effect. One reply (from Lagos) suggests that the general effect of our withdrawal would in the long term be a thoroughly healthy one.

¹ See 151, note 3.

² On Fiji, see 353.

³ ie Lord Shepherd.

I am sure we should attach more importance to our relations in Afro-Asian capitals—sometimes difficult enough in all conscience—than to the unrewarding effort to keep on terms with their representatives (whose views are often their own and not those of their Government) in the overheated atmosphere of the Committee of 24.

It is for these reasons that, having carefully weighed all the arguments, I reluctantly but finally come to the view that the clear balance of advantage for us lies in withdrawal from the Committee.

Since reaching this conclusion I have seen Hugh Caradon's telegram 276 reporting that the Americans, not having heard from us, have decided to remain on the Committee for the time being, but not necessarily for the whole of the 1968 session. They propose, however, to express their dissatisfaction with the approach of the Committee to its work. The Australians have also confirmed that so long as the Americans continue to participate, they would find it difficult to leave. They too, for the time being, propose to remain on the Committee.

In these circumstances, while I still consider in principle that it would turn out to be to our advantage to withdraw from the Committee, I think that we should inform the Americans and the Australians that we are prepared to give the Committee a further try under its new Tunisian Chairman. We should tell them, however, that if there is no improvement in the Committee's behaviour and the Americans and Australians decide to withdraw then we shall do so too. I very much hope that you will be able to agree.

150 FCO 60/20, no 17

9 Feb 1968

'Committee of Twenty-Four': letter (reply) from Mr Brown to Mr Thomson arguing that Britain should not withdraw

Thank you for your letter of 8 February, about the difficult question of our participation in the Committee of Twenty-Four.¹ You have not only stated the case from the Commonwealth Office viewpoint most persuasively but also (especially in your second paragraph) summed up the dilemma which we have all had to face in dealing with this problem. How far do we carry our proclaimed readiness to support the United Nations to the hilt?

I naturally accept your judgement that the Commonwealth arguments show a balance in favour of withdrawing from the Committee. I can myself see the attraction in doing so. But, as you know from Goronwy Roberts, we here, as well as Hugh Caradon in New York, have been persuaded, again on balance, to the other view not only because of the general question of our attitude to the United Nations and our need to be active in it if we are to maintain our influence. Even more telling, we think, is the fact that the matters to which you draw attention in your letter are going to be discussed in the United Nations whether or not we are members of the Committee of Twenty-Four. As you point out, the Committee operates under a brief from the General Assembly, adopted by a large majority and with certain points of particular difficulty (notably the proposal for a conference of colonial peoples) inserted at the instance of the Assembly itself, not of the Committee. The unpalatable

¹ See 149.

fact is that our difference on these questions is not just with the Committee but with the majority at the United Nations. We cannot, therefore, avoid unacceptable resolutions and galling defects by absenting ourselves from the Committee. Hugh Caradon advises—and I think his argument must be given great weight—that so long as we have to make our case in some forum of the U.N. on these issues, we shall be best advised to be ready to do so all the way along the line. This does not, of course, mean we must submit to outrageous behaviour by the Committee, nor should we do so. Our people on the Committee have never minced words and I intend to send a personal message to Hugh Caradon asking him to take an even tougher line and indeed to walk out of the Committee when the occasion demands it.

Although, therefore, we may still not entirely agree on the issue of principle, I am glad to see from the final paragraphs of your letter that you have concluded, in the light of the latest news that the Americans and Australians do not propose to withdraw, that this is not a propitious moment to do so ourselves. This is my feeling also, the more so since the change of Chairman might improve conditions in the Committee. There are some signs of a fairly widespread feeling in the Committee that it overstepped the limit last year. As you say, it seems worth giving it a further try. I think, however, that we are in agreement that we should not follow the American example and publicly indicate that we regard the Committee as being on trial.

There is, however, one point at the end of your letter on which I must enter a *caveat*. While I certainly agree that we should keep an open mind on the question whether it continues to be in our interest to remain on the Committee or not, I would not want in advance to go so far as to tell the Americans and Australians that we will leave if at any time they decide to do so. Certainly, if the Committee behaves in such a way as to drive them off, the chances are high that we would decide that we too had had enough. But I hope you will agree that we must leave ourselves free to consider the question when the time comes.

I enclose a copy of a draft telegram² to Hugh Caradon which, if you agree, I should like to get off to him as soon as possible. I would also propose to send him copies of your letter and mine, so that he has the fullest possible insight into our thinking on this question which will, I am afraid, continue to plague us.

² Not printed.

151 FCO 58/491, no 5 7 Dec 1970
‘UK membership of the Committee of Twenty-Four’: letter from Sir C Crowe¹ to Sir P Adams² recommending that the UK should now withdraw

On 12 October the General Assembly passed Resolution 2621 containing the Programme of Action to implement Resolution 1514³ over the next ten years. The

¹ Chief of Administration, HM Diplomatic Service, 1965–1968; high commissioner to Canada, 1968–1970; successor to Caradon as permanent representative to UN, 1970–1973.

² Assistant under-secretary of state, FCO.

³ Passed in Dec 1960, calling for ‘a speedy and unconditional end to colonialism’, sponsored by 43 Afro-Asian nations, Britain and the US abstaining.

United Kingdom voted against it. On 3 December the Committee of 24 concluded its session for the year. These two events have made it desirable for us to consider once again whether we should remain on the Committee. This time our recommendation is that we should leave it.

2. The Mission last looked at this question last summer. It then reached the unenthusiastic conclusion (see Fred Warner's letter to John Lambert of 24 July and its enclosure) that the balance of advantage at that time seemed to lie in favour of remaining on the Committee. In the past few months, however, a number of new factors have entered the equation. Two of them seem to strengthen the case for staying on. The recommendations of the three Sub-Committees which deal with our individual territories have shown definite signs of improvement over the past year or two, and this year they were on the whole more realistic than they had been before. Secondly, in spite of an unsatisfactory outcome to the consideration of the Article 73.e question in September, members of the Committee have at last shown themselves (our telegram no. 3118) more cooperative on the question of the Associated States.

3. But all the other factors which have arisen lately strengthen the case for coming off the Committee. I think that, taken with the previous arguments for leaving, they make a clear case for doing so. The first factor is the Programme of Action referred to above, which was adopted as Resolution 2621. With this Programme the Committee threw off the restraint it had shown in recent years and went all-out for an extremist presentation of decolonisation themes. It is true that several of the Afro-Asian and Latin-American members of the Committee did not favour this course and would have preferred something which, like Resolution 1514 itself, could have secured the acquiescence of the Administering Powers, but the fact remains that the Committee could not stand up to a small minority of extremists and there is little reason to think it will ever be able to do so if the latter bring full pressure to bear.

4. The second factor in favour of leaving the Committee is its reluctance to deal with the question of the small territories. For three years in succession the General Assembly (on the last occasion in paragraph 13 of Resolution 2548) has invited the Committee to continue to pay particular attention to this question. The only discussion which took place on this was in April, 1969, and at one stage the debate was transformed by the Communists and their henchmen into a series of tributes to Lenin (on the occasion of the 99th anniversary of his birth). One or two members of the Committee are genuinely interested in pursuing this question, and the debate might well be resumed in 1971; but experience with the Programme of Action suggests that it is at best doubtful whether the Committee would be able to produce any sensible ideas which could help us with the problems we face in the decolonisation of our residual small territories.

5. A further consideration is that the composition of the Committee next year will not be more favourable to us. Italy is leaving and, as in the case of Australia which withdrew at the beginning of last year, it is improbable that any like-minded successor will be found. Norway is being succeeded by Sweden which will presumably be marginally less favourable to us. Trinidad, if it is chosen by the Latin Americans in succession to Honduras, should be useful in discussions on the Associated States, but will presumably operate in close contact with the Afro-Asians on most other topics. If the Fijians really do take up Australia's empty seat, they

should make some pertinent comments on the situation in the Pacific dependencies; but we are not really in trouble with the Committee about these, and I should imagine that on other points the Fijians would find themselves increasingly dragged along by the Afro-Asian chariot. Lastly, the United States Mission here, who encouraged Italy to leave, are using Italy's departure as a plank in the strong recommendation they are putting to the State Department that the United States should itself withdraw from the Committee.

6. There is a final factor against our continued membership which is not yet actual but which, I presume, will become so during the next twelve months: the evolution of the UK's policy on Rhodesia. At present we still have a strong moral position, which the members of the Committee accept, based on a scrupulous observance of Chapter XI of the Charter.⁴ If any future course of action were to involve the renunciation of our theoretical obligations towards the people of Rhodesia under Chapter XI, the consequent outcry would have reactions on the Committee's position towards all our other dependent territories. In such a situation we might no longer get even the comparatively fair hearing we now receive on the individual small territories.

7. What effect will our leaving have on our general situation at the United Nations? On the whole I should have thought very little in itself. Of course there will be some disenchantment on the part of those Afro-Asian and Commonwealth elements on the Committee with whom we have been able to work most closely. And if our departure comes at the same time as a decision to supply arms to South Africa it will be seen as a further step in moving towards Portugal and South Africa. But all this will be only incidental to the row there will be over arms. In connection with Rhodesia, as argued above, it will help us to be off this Committee. And in general I think people will fully understand why we should not want to stand in the pillory any longer—indeed some have wondered how we have gone on so long. Having voted against the Programme of Action our reasons will be perfectly respectable.

8. Taking all these factors into account, it is my view that the balance of advantage has firmly swung against our remaining on the Committee of 24. I believe that such a conclusion would be in accord with the fact that our decolonisation endeavours are now largely completed, and would reflect the fact that colonial issues are now of only secondary interest and importance. I accordingly recommend that the UK should withdraw from membership of the Committee.

9. There is one qualification I would like to make about this. We have in recent years, as indicated above, made some progress in persuading the three geographical Sub-Committees to adopt more sensible conclusions and recommendations, which bear some relation to the realities of the situation in our smaller territories. When the Australians left the Committee of 24 at the beginning of 1969, they announced that they would be prepared to attend, by invitation, meetings of the Committee when information on Australian territories, provided under Article 73.e, was being discussed. The Australians have duly participated in the discussions in the Sub-Committee concerned, and the main Committee, when their territories have been on the agenda. I would not propose that we should go as far as they have gone. If our departure has, as it may well have, a near-fatal effect on the Committee as a serious UN body, we would not particularly want to give it the kiss of life by continuing to

¹ See 147, Annex.

participate in all its discussions on our territories as we do now. But if the Sub-Committees continued to deal with British territories in the same sort of way as hitherto, there might at some stage be advantage in taking part in their discussions so as to present information on constitutional, economic and other progress in the most favourable manner from our point of view. I should accordingly be glad if, provided you agree with the main recommendation that we should leave the Committee, we might be given discretion to take part in the meetings of the Sub-Committees if it seems that this would be to our advantage at the time.

10. If these recommendations are accepted, I would like to make the announcement of our withdrawal in the course of January and anyway before the Committee starts its work next year. This is unlikely to be before the end of January or the beginning of February, 1971. My own preference would be to act sooner rather than later but I gather that some delay might give time for the present Chairman and the Premiers of the Associated States, in consultation with us, to make some further progress in the direction of getting UN recognition of the decolonisation of the States. It would also be desirable for the members of the Trusteeship Council Visiting Mission to New Guinea to have elected Denis Allen as their Chairman before our departure from the Committee of 24 is known. Otherwise the Sierra Leone and Iraq members of the Visiting Mission might try to take it out on us by refusing to support the British member of the Visiting Mission for the chairmanship.

11. In these circumstances I should be grateful if you could let us have your decision before Christmas and give us discretion on the timing of the formal act of withdrawal. If you agree, we would at some stage tell the American Mission here. But it is clear that the State Department will reach their decision on their own Mission's recommendation on the basis of U.S. arguments only, and I believe that there is no need for us to discuss our views with them before the British decision is reached on a calculation of purely British interests. For the reasons set out in paragraph 10 above, we think it important, if our decision is to withdraw, to give no hint of our intentions until we judge the moment appropriate to announce them ourselves. We are already having to parry innocent enquiries about our future participation in the Committee, and past evidence shows that even information given in confidence to the Americans and our old Commonwealth partners on this kind of question tends to become widely known at the UN in a matter of hours. I hope therefore that discretion can be observed even over the fact that we are reviewing our role.

152 PREM 13/1521, no 29

15 Jan 1971

[Committee of 24]: letter from Mr Godber to T Dalyell¹ on Britain's withdrawal from the committee

You asked, in your letter to me of 12 January, for our reasons for leaving the Committee of 24.

I attach the text of a written Answer² to a Question by Michael Hamilton which you will have seen in Hansard of 12 January.

The 'Programme of Action' mentioned in the Answer was drawn up in the Committee of 24 to mark the Tenth Anniversary of the 'Declaration of the Granting

¹ Tam Dalyell, MP (Lab) for West Lothian since 1962.

² Not printed.

of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples'. This is a thoroughly impractical and doctrinaire document, with many generalisations which have no basis in fact and which are not relevant to the needs and problems of the remaining dependencies (its first operative paragraph declares the 'continuation of colonialism a crime which constitutes a violation of the Charter of the United Nations ...'). When the Programme was put before the Committee of 24 last October we made it clear that its adoption would be a factor which we would take into account in determining our attitude to future participation in UN activities in the colonial field.

As the Parliamentary Answer points out, the adoption of the Programme of Action reinforced our doubts about the ability of the Committee of 24 to contribute towards the solution of the problems of the remaining dependencies. As you know, the major issues of Southern Africa are now handled by other UN bodies, including the Security Council itself. For the rest, the major task of decolonisation is virtually complete. What remains is a number of small, often isolated territories with individual problems requiring individual solutions. For some years now the Committee has been asked by the General Assembly to pay particular attention to these small territories; but it has been lax about this, and our experience on the Committee does not suggest that it can make a significant contribution to the solution of their problems.³

³ The UN secretary-general was informed of Britain's withdrawal on 11 Jan 1971.

CHAPTER 7

Planning and priorities after the withdrawal from East of Suez

Document numbers 153–161

153 CAB 129/136, C(68)42

23 Feb 1968

‘Foreign policy’: Cabinet memorandum by Mr Brown on three options in pursuing a policy based on Europe

My colleagues will remember that the original intention was that the review of foreign policy should really be a paper about Europe. The more I have thought about it, however, the more I have found it desirable to set our policy towards Europe into the framework of world events and of our interests world-wide. Accordingly, the attached paper begins, after a brief statement of the decisions which have led to our Europe-based policy, by looking to the world at large (Part One). Then it comes back to Europe (Part Two), and deals with the options open to us there.

Part one

I have been conducting a review of foreign policy. I lay the results before my colleagues as a basis for policy and for the further detailed studies which will be needed.

2. We start from a world in which the main currents of world events have assumed new dimensions from those that dominated the immediate post-war period. The United States is and will remain the strongest power but a certain balance based on the nuclear equilibrium has been established between the United States and the USSR and will be helped if they can reach an agreement on anti-ballistic missiles (ABMs). The Soviet Union believes that in the long run the balance will be overthrown to her advantage and this will remain the goal towards which she will work. Destabilising situations can still occur. We and our Western allies must be on the alert to prevent them. Both East and West must act responsibly. In the immediate future East-West differences will remain at the centre of events. In the longer run, the major problems are more likely to be in the area of North-South differences. The developing countries including those of the new Commonwealth will undergo a prolonged period of social and economic strain.

3. The problems of advanced societies are no less critical. The Western world is in a state of some instability, partly because the pressures of East-West differences have been relaxed, thus giving scope to Gaullism, and partly because of the social and industrial tensions produced by insistent demands for a rising standard of living and by the onset of major technological innovations. A number of Western Governments face peculiarly difficult problems of national unity, e.g. Canada and Belgium. There

lurk below the surface even greater dangers of internal divisions in Italy and possibly even in Germany and France. These problems in the Western world make it difficult to achieve and maintain a common and stable foreign policy at the very time when this is so urgently needed to deal with the North-South problems and the continued East-West tensions. We ourselves have contributed to changes both in the developed and the developing worlds, not least by our major decision of July, 1967, to withdraw militarily from East of Suez. There are risks in this, but given our economic situation and the changing pattern of world events, to which I have referred, it is right that we should re-think our foreign policy.

4. The decisions we announced on 16th January have gone far to shape the options open to this country. We have decided that our defence effort must be overwhelmingly in and for Europe. The run-down of our military position East of Suez and our concentration on the defence of Europe in partnership with the United States parallel, in the defence field, the decisions we had already taken in the economic and political fields when we decided to try to negotiate our entry into the European Communities. These are fundamental decisions which did and do accord with British interests. We cannot abandon them without damaging our interests and incurring the charge of indecisiveness. It remains the case that any alternative to our European-based policy is a second best. The main point to consider, therefore, is how to circumvent or overcome the storms and perils which beset this course.

5. Before doing so I think it right to draw attention to the implications of our decision to disengage militarily from East of Suez (except for our remaining dependencies). In recent years the safety of many of our material interests East of Suez, e.g. in the Persian Gulf, has not depended primarily upon our military presence. Nevertheless, the withdrawal of our forces is bound in the short term to increase the risks to our own interests, if only because it may unleash local animosities, e.g. between Singapore and Malaysia, or tempt larger powers to absorb their neighbours, e.g. the conflicting ambitions of Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Iraq has not given up her ambitions to take Kuwait; Iran has a long-standing claim to Bahrain; Saudi Arabia claims most of Abu Dhabi and part of Muscat and Oman. In addition, there are another half dozen or so lesser territorial disputes in the Gulf, some of which have an important bearing on oil rights. If the Shah fails to satisfy his highly nationalistic critics at home that he has protected what they regard as Iran's just rights, his personal position will be at risk and so too will Iran's western orientation. Although the Russians have not yet extended their influence into the Gulf, they are increasing their efforts in the Middle East generally, and it remains their objective to replace Western influence by their own and to gain indirect control of the Middle Eastern oil supply to the West. In this object they can hope to find willing Arab partners, Egypt for example.

6. In the worst case, as much as £1,000 million of British investment in the Gulf could be up for grabs. No less than 40 per cent of Gulf oil is in British ownership and makes a significant contribution to our foreign exchange earnings. There is the possibility that the very large sterling balances held by some of the Gulf states will fall into unfriendly hands. But the more likely risks lie not in the seizure of our assets (though we cannot dismiss this possibility): they arise rather from the political instability which may follow our departure. If the conflicting territorial claims in the Gulf were to lead to local wars, or even only to terrorism and sabotage, it would become difficult to maintain the free flow of oil. At present 40 per cent of Britain's oil

supplies (and over 50 per cent of Western Europe's) come from the Gulf. Once we have withdrawn militarily, we shall not be able to bring much, if any, power to bear to prevent or limit the consequences of local instability.

7. What is true in the Gulf is true generally outside the Atlantic area. In the 1970s we shall still have a general capability for use if required and of course must be able to carry out our responsibilities towards our dependent territories. Nevertheless we shall not be able to make any significant military contribution to maintain the balance of power beyond the Atlantic area. If, as is only too likely, conflicts break out in these vast territories inhabited by most of the world's population our trade and investments will be at risk. We have recently seen how local instabilities and animosities have affected our oil interests in Nigeria and our copper supplies from Zambia. We shall not physically be able to prevent major conflicts from arising, nor shall we be able to do anything of much account to prevent such turbulence from sucking in our countries and conceivably leading to a Great Power confrontation.

8. In short, as far as the developing world is concerned, we shall find ourselves in much the same position as other European countries, for example France or Italy. The United States alone of the Western Powers will have an effective intervention capability. If in acting to further her own self-interest she prejudices Western European interests there is nothing we can do about it. It will not be surprising, as they shoulder more of the burden elsewhere, if the United States decide to let the brunt of it in Europe fall upon the Europeans. Our move reinforces the tendency for the two Super Powers to increase the distance between themselves and the middling countries and in so doing to fall into the habit of arranging matters between themselves, perhaps to the exclusion of others.

9. I accept that given our present situation our policy should be European-based despite the risks to which I have drawn attention above. But while I must stress that in the worldwide context there are certain sorts of influence which we can no longer carry out, I believe that a military presence is not the only way to exercise influence. There is still a good deal we can do in the parts of the world from which we are withdrawing militarily. If we cannot totally replace the degree of protection for our interests which we lose when we withdraw our military presence we can at least mitigate the consequences by maintaining a British presence through non-military means. These do not imply large expenditures. In particular, the Commonwealth association still gives us considerable influence. A non-military presence should in my view contain such elements as trade, technical assistance and the projection of Britain, for example by the teaching of English and the promotion of various links, especially in the Commonwealth, between professional and student groups in this country and abroad.

Part two

We were right, both on 16th January and before, to make Europe the centre of our policy. There are, however, a variety of ways of conducting a policy centred on Europe. In the remainder of the paper I consider the main alternatives. Before doing so we need to be clear what our broad objectives are. We have now determined to put the economic strength of Britain on a secure basis. This is vital to an effective foreign policy and therefore for our national security. It is also indispensable to the welfare of

our people and to the social programmes of our Party. These are our main objectives. In addition, so far as we can we should aim to make the United Nations more effective, to ameliorate conditions in the developing world and to forestall international disputes, especially those which may prove damaging to us. It is fallacious to think that we can turn ourselves into a country like Sweden. They have a tiny population, a very large country and a very small number of highly specialised industries. Britain, with a population of 55 million, anxious for a higher standard of living and highly dependent upon our ability to sell advanced technology, to trade worldwide and to maintain the free flow of raw materials, must not become relegated to an isolated position in which our voice counts for little. If we are to have some significant degree of control over the circumstances in which we live we need to be able to operate on a wider regional power basis than this country alone affords. Only Western Europe can provide such a basis.

2. Broadly speaking there are three options open to us within this Europe-based policy:—

(a) We can operate essentially as a 'loner' avoiding all entanglements so far as we can and making the best bargains we can with the Super Powers and with European countries as may seem most expedient on an *ad hoc* basis.

(b) We can aim to produce a Third Force Europe, balancing between the United States and the Soviet Union, siding sometimes with one and sometimes with the other.

(c) We can aim to produce a Western Europe which is stronger and more cohesive than at present and which, generally speaking, expects to act in harmony with the United States.

There are a variety of other courses but I have not considered them in detail because they are either variants of the three main possibilities or impracticable in present circumstances.

Course (a)

3. I recognise that circumstances may eventually leave us little option but to follow course (a). But I dismiss it as an aim of our policy since it would be inconsistent with at least two of the objectives set out above. It would put our national security at risk because it would tend to break up the international framework which has preserved the world from a major war since 1945. If we opted out it would on the one hand increase the growing American tendency only to help those who help themselves and the United States while on the other it would encourage the Soviet Union to persist in her policy of getting the Americans out of Europe, of fragmenting Western Europe, and of encouraging neutralism with a view to changing the balance of power fundamentally. Europe has shown that she can survive one Gaullist country but two would break apart both Europe and the Western Alliance. Moreover, our bargaining power would be small and declining. In such circumstances we could by no means depend upon retaining our permanent seat on the Security Council. The loss of this would entail the loss of our privileged position in certain other international organisations. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the 'loner' situation would favour us financially or economically. Sterling would be more vulnerable and we should not have the benefits of large scale modern technological integration and collaboration.

Course (b)

4. There are attractions in a Third Force Europe but on examination they prove superficial. The prospects are particularly unattractive for a British Labour Government. In such a Europe our social democratic philosophy would be seriously challenged by Communism, particularly in France and Italy. It would be a costly and lengthy business to provide Europe with a genuinely independent position including its own nuclear defence. If despite the effort Europe failed to emerge as a Third Force we should be notably worse off than we are now. The attempt to form a Third Force Europe involves breaking existing links and closing options which could not easily be recovered. If, on the other hand, Third Force Europe really succeeded there would be a considerable risk that Germany would be the dominant power in it. All our existing arrangements and Western European Union in particular are designed to tie Germany closely into the West in an innocuous way and to keep the Germans from too close a connection with nuclear weapons. Such arrangements would be scrapped in the context of a Third Force Europe. What the consequences would be for relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union may be guessed at. Equally the consequences for the United States attitude towards Europe would be serious. Nothing would be more likely to encourage Goldwaterism¹ and even isolationism.

5. Furthermore, while it might be the object of a Third Force Europe to balance between the United States and the USSR there would in fact be a serious possibility that the two of them would prefer each other's company, possibly at the expense of Western Europe. In any event, it would give the Soviet Union the opportunity of playing off Europe against America and vice versa. This is a situation which would greatly favour them and would not favour us. In addition to this political-security drawback there is a further drawback on the economic side. Despite the current difficulties of the dollar the United States economy is forging strongly ahead and widening the gap between American and European standards. We shall have to make a great effort in Europe to close this gap and it seems most unlikely that it will be possible to do so at a time when course (b) would inevitably involve us in greatly increased defence expenditure and in a considerable cooling of relations with the United States.

Course (c)

6. Course (c) involves building up Western Europe as a full partner with the United States in promoting common Western objectives. The chief of these are rising standards of living, financial stability, expanding commercial opportunities, increasingly close relations with Eastern Europe and the promotion of détente with the Soviet Union. Both our security and our economic objectives will be much more easily obtained if we proceed in harmony with rather than antagonism to the United States. But at the same time we have to recognise that while Western Europe remains fragmented there will be little incentive for the United States to pay great heed to European attitudes and interests. What is perhaps even more important is that in commercial competition with the United States industry and technology will achieve a position of dominance in Europe as well as in the Western hemisphere. While we certainly draw benefits from American investment of various kinds in Europe, it is not in our interests that critical portions of our economy should become

¹ See 89, note 2.

staellites [sic] of American business. To organise an industry and technology which can compete with the United States the countries of Western Europe need to embark on large-scale programmes to rationalise and improve their technology, production markets and financial arrangements. Clearly the European Communities form the basis for such an effort. If we can join them while we still have a substantial lead in various aspects of modern life and industry we should be able to play a major part in shaping the future of Europe and of European relations with the United States. But we have to acknowledge that time is not on our side. Our position in the world league is steadily slipping. The EEC is enormously much more powerful than we are and even the individual countries of the Six e.g. Germany and France, are in some respects stronger than we are. In some aspects of the race Japan has already passed us. We must therefore bend every effort to join the European Communities at the earliest possible moment. This will be hard to do but I conclude that course (c) so much more nearly lends itself to our objectives than the alternatives that it is clearly the course we should follow.

7. If this is agreed we need to consider in the light of the situation taken as a whole what practical steps we can take to give reality to course (c). Against the background of the Prime Minister's visits to Moscow and Washington, of our recent exchanges with the EFTA and EEC countries and in particular of the results of Dr. Kiesinger's² talks with General de Gaulle, the following are the main considerations on which we need to form a view.

NATO

8. Our national security depends upon maintaining a close link with the United States and the credibility of the American guarantee of Western Europe. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is the way in which the United States commitment to Western Europe is made manifest. Despite gloomy prognostications and the withdrawal of the French, NATO is in fact in a reasonably healthy state at the present. We should do what we can to preserve and strengthen it but what is even more important in present circumstances is that we should do nothing to weaken it. A further withdrawal of British forces from the Continent might very well trigger off a chain reaction which led the Americans, Canadians, Belgians and Danes, to say nothing of the rest, into similar reductions. This would have the undesirable consequences of leaving Germany as the major military power in Western Europe. It might very well also mean the effective unravelling of NATO and hence of our security.

Negotiations with the Six, Five and Ten

9. We have to recognise that General de Gaulle is determined to keep us out of the European Communities. So long as he is effectively in control of France he will be able to do so. But we have many friends in Europe including many in France who will try to help us. Therefore our business must be to maintain our aim and keep our nerve. Moreover, it is only by exerting pressure that we shall get some tolerable arrangements short of entry in the European Economic Community (EEC). If we were to settle for some half-way house this would mean that all pressure was

² Kurt Kiesinger, Christian Democrat chancellor of Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) during the 'grand coalition' (1966–1969) between his own party and the Social Democrats led by Willy Brandt.

removed from the French and there would be a serious risk that we should never get any further. There is no reason why we should not discuss any ideas which the French, the Germans or others may have, provided they do not distract attention from our major object of entry into the Communities, together with those of our European Free Trade Area (EFTA) partners who wish to join us. But it is up to them to put forward concrete ideas. Anything put forward will clearly be subject to hard bargaining, to French attempts to reduce its substantive content and very possibly at the end of the day to a French veto. Accordingly, it would be unwise to restrict ourselves to talks in which the French can effectively exercise a veto. There is no reason why there should not be various sets of talks proceeding simultaneously. The Benelux proposals, or something like them, have three great advantages. In the first place they will help to prevent the EEC from developing in ways which would make it harder for us to join eventually and in the meantime from undertaking actions which might be damaging to our interests, e.g. in the monetary field. Secondly, if they give rise to some important degree of co-operation between us and as many other Western European countries as are willing on some major substantive question they will considerably reduce our isolation and improve our bargaining position. Thirdly, the more progress we make on Benelux-type proposals the more the French will be under pressure. Eventually they may come to think that the damage to them of keeping us out is greater than the risks involved in letting us in. Therefore, there is advantage to us in collaborating as closely as we can on any issue whether in the political, defence, economic or technological fields with as many Western European countries as are prepared to associate themselves with us for this purpose.

East-West questions

10. To a large extent the French and ourselves are in competition for Germany. The Germans are tugged in many directions. They know their own security depends upon the United States and they must be careful not to unravel NATO as General de Gaulle would like or to take part too obviously in his schemes to reduce United States influence, e.g. his campaign against the dollar. On the other hand, their great achievement since the war has been Franco-German reconciliation and the establishment of the Common Market. They will do all they can to avoid putting these gains at risk. The other main strand in German policy is their deeply-felt need to change the situation in East Germany. Fortunately in the last two years or so the Germans have swung round to the sort of policy on East Germany and Eastern Europe generally which we have long advocated and which we can wholly support. We must try to make the most of this with the Germans. Moreover a policy of small steps towards Eastern Europe, leading eventually in the direction of some sort of confederal arrangements with the two parts of Germany, together with appropriate restrictions on the troops and weapons to be deployed by either side in Central Europe is very much in our interests. Apart from the financial aspects it certainly offers the best prospect of an eventual stable arrangement in Central Europe which both the Russians and the Europeans can accept.

Attitudes to the developing world

11. If Europe either fragments or becomes a Third Force, systematically taking a different point of view from the United States, there may be serious consequences in

the developing world. In the first place, the Americans will probably not be prepared indefinitely to bear the whole burden of defending Western interests everywhere. They may decide to opt out of certain situations, e.g. in Africa or the Persian Gulf, which could lead to local turbulence with highly damaging consequences to our material interests. Furthermore if Western Europe and the United States do not act in harmony there is little prospect that the developed world will produce an effort that is anything like commensurate with the scale of problems in the underdeveloped world, bearing in mind that the population of the world will double by the end of the century. If the developing world is to be helped, with all that this implies for stability and expanding trade, it is essential that Western Europe and the United States should act in harmony.

Conclusions

12. I draw the following conclusions to which I invite the agreement of my colleagues:—

(a) Within the framework of the European-orientated policy which we have already adopted, we should aim at Course (c), namely a Western Europe which is stronger and more cohesive than at present and which, generally speaking, expects to act in harmony with the United States.

(b) In pursuing this course we should do nothing to weaken NATO or the American commitment to Europe and on the contrary should strengthen NATO where we can.

(c) We should keep up our pressure to join the EEC together with those of our friends who want to. To this end we should agree to discuss any concrete ideas put forward by the Germans or the French or indeed others, so long as the clear objective is our entry into the Communities. But at the same time it will be of the utmost importance to give substance to Benelux-type proposals in partnership with as many Western European countries as are prepared to associate themselves with us for this purpose.

(d) We should aim to get the maximum co-operation from Germany. In line with this we should, together with the Germans, pursue an East-West policy of small steps aiming at détente, some form of confederation of Germany and some parallel measures to reduce and control troops and weapons stationed in Central Europe.

(e) We must expect that our ability to influence events outside the Atlantic area will be considerably less than it used to be. But the withdrawal of our military presence from East of Suez does not and should not mean a loss of interest in the world at large. We shall still maintain a general capability and must be able to carry out our responsibilities towards our dependent territories. We can build to our profit on our Commonwealth links, on support for the United Nations, on our world-wide commercial connections both visible and invisible, on the importance of our language and on our skills in technical assistance.

(f) By the decisions we have already taken we have made major changes in British policy. We now need to be on the alert to capitalise on these changes. We risk being left financially, commercially and politically on the margin of world events. The decisions we now take will lessen or increase this risk. They will be critical to the future of this country.

154 FCO 49/15, no 8

7 Mar 1968

'Non-military aspects of external policy: first thoughts': note by the Commonwealth Office on the UK as a Europe-based but outward looking power

[When Cabinet discussed Brown's memo (no 153), the suggestion was made that when it became possible to consider some modest increase in overseas expenditure, the aim should be to offset military withdrawal East of Suez by an enlargement of the UK's non-military presence. The foreign and Commonwealth secretaries were asked in due course to circulate proposals. Other departments consulted were Civil Service, the Ministry of Overseas Development, MoD, Education and Science (brought in to advise on the question of teaching English overseas). The Commonwealth Office responded first with these brief thoughts (FCO 49/15, no 4, Sir B Trend to Sir P Gore-Booth, 28 Feb 1968).]

1. Opening section

Reference to Cabinet minutes—where do we go from here?—whether we enter the E.E.C. or not we are now a Europe-based power, but with a difference—we have an array of assets and opportunities in the rest of the world—we should be Europe-based but outward looking.

2. Non-military policy

There is nothing new in this; we have already withdrawn militarily from India, Africa, etc; to that extent our relations with Malaysia, Singapore, etc. will simply be normalised.

3. What approach?

Maintaining influence overseas is not an objective but a means to the end of fostering a situation in which our own interests and prosperity can grow. The most quantifiable of our interests are our exports, the protection of our import sources, our investment income and our relations with our creditors. Less quantifiable but none the less important are the assets we possess and need to foster by virtue of the widespread use of the British language, the large communities of people of British stock living abroad, and in general the existence of the British connexion.

4. Trade

About two-thirds of our total exports of £5,000 m. and probably over 90 per cent of our total investment income of £1,000 m. are still with countries outside Western Europe. Therefore our prosperity depends greatly upon the stability, prosperity and attitude towards us of the world beyond Europe. Nigeria is an example where a return to peaceful conditions is vital to restore our trade position.

5. Financial issues

Both the protection of our invisible income and our relations with our creditors (e.g. the holders of the sterling balances) are heavily dependent upon maintaining good relations with the Governments of countries outside Europe. Political as well as economic factors can influence other countries on these financial issues (e.g. threats by India to our investments as reaction to our policy over Asian immigration from Kenya).

6. *Aid*

With the developing world aid is an important factor in influencing political relations, trade and invisible income. Pakistan is a good example of a country where our aid policy has improved general political and trading conditions. Aid is often a sprat to catch a mackerel.

7. *Projection of Britain*

Our image depends greatly on the English language; on the interchange of professional people (N.B. the Commonwealth Foundation) and volunteers—on our information effort, which should be chiefly devoted to trade and should be the sharp end of our technological revolution—the new Commonwealth is a clever system of maintaining the British connexion—the general climate of thought about Britain depends greatly on the work of our Diplomatic Missions.

8. *Diplomacy*

Britain's diplomatic skill and experience can still play a great part in the world—examples are the Rann of Kutch settlement,¹ the U.N. resolution on Suez last December, the Athens Embassy's work in preventing war in Cyprus.

9. *Conclusion*

It would be useful if Ministers could help show that Britain is not 'signing off' and retiring into her own back garden—this could be done in speeches and by an increased number of visits abroad.

¹ In 1965 UK mediation secured a ceasefire and withdrawal of troops from the disputed Rann of Kutch between India and West Pakistan.

155 CAB 148/37, OPD(68)44 (Revise) 24 July 1968 **'Non-military means of influence in the Persian Gulf, South-East Asia and Australasia': joint memorandum by Mr Stewart and Mr Thomson for Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee**

We have prepared this report in answer to our colleagues' request for an examination of the non-military means by which our influence may be maintained and strengthened in those areas outside Europe from which we have decided to withdraw our forces. We have concentrated on the next five years—i.e. the years leading up to and immediately following our final withdrawal—and on those areas most directly affected by our withdrawal—i.e. the Persian Gulf (Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, the other five Trucial States, and Muscat and Oman), South East Asia (Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Burma, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) and Australasia (Australia and New Zealand).

2. We are not asking our colleagues to approve or endorse any specific proposals. Our purpose is first to consider in rather broad terms the general nature of influence and our means for acquiring it, second to outline the general shape of our interests in the three areas under consideration and third to indicate the directions in which we think our non-military effort should be moving in the next five years. There are obviously a wide variety of techniques and means by which Britain may be able to

continue to command a profitable influence in these areas after military withdrawal, but approval for any particular one of them will necessarily be reserved for further scrutiny as each case arises.

Why do we need influence?

3. Influence is an instrument, not an end, of our external policies. Its possession or acquisition is only useful where we have interests or objectives to further. In such circumstances, however, influence is essential. First, even in the simplest international transactions, attitudes are affected not only by the terms of the immediate bargain to be struck but by many other factors, by considerations of relative power, attitudes and prejudices ingrained beforehand, by public opinion etc. A country's influence at any given moment is not only a question of the cards immediately to hand but also of a long build-up of other elements, of which not all will have been under direct control. Secondly, other powers, whether friendly or hostile, compete with us for influence. Reluctance on our side to take part in the competition will not make our competitors slacken their efforts; it will only increase their success. Thirdly, our overseas interests are affected by a wide range of decisions taken in or by other countries in every conceivable form of activity—political, financial, commercial, scientific, educational, etc. We cannot ensure that our views are made known directly on more than a handful of these decisions. But all of them are susceptible, to a greater or lesser degree, to our influence.

4. In geographical terms, our interest in security, stability and prosperity underlines the importance of maintaining and increasing our influence in Europe and North America. But our fundamental objective for the next decade is to get our economy into good order and maintain it there. As a result our very substantial economic interests outside the Atlantic area (including the particular areas with which we are dealing) and the stable political and economic conditions on which they depend will remain of vital significance. Our military withdrawal from East of Suez is in this respect not a new phenomenon but only a continuation of a process which began with our withdrawal from India in 1947.

5. It is this distribution of our economic interests, deriving in many cases from our Commonwealth connections, which differentiates us from say Germany or Italy. Our ability to affect general political developments outside the Atlantic area will diminish. But for the foreseeable future our direct economic world-wide interests will require us to do what we can to maintain and increase our existing influence outside Europe. Indeed in terms of stark economic interest, we cannot afford to lose such influence especially since it seems unlikely that we shall be fully inside the E.E.C. within the five-year period we are considering. This is not to suggest any change in our basic direction. Quite the contrary. The success of our European policies depends on our economic strength. Our efforts will count for nothing if we lose the strength we derive from our economic assets throughout the Commonwealth and the rest of the world. These basic economic considerations are reinforced by the need for Britain (and in due course Britain within Europe), as a trading nation living by her trade with the rest of the world, to play a realistic part in shaping the world's affairs. In sum we share with our friends and allies, in the areas under discussion and elsewhere, common interests in stability and peaceful change. But we compete vigorously with them in promoting our direct economic interests.

The sources of influence

6. Our influence in any sphere is determined ultimately by individual judgments in countries overseas about the United Kingdom. The particular sort of influence we want in any country will depend on our objectives there. One sort of influence does not guarantee another, though they may be closely related. Good political relations do not necessarily mean booming exports (though in state-run economies they help), nor vice versa (c.f. China). In the following paragraphs we consider the main sources of these various sorts of influence.

Power

7. The single most important source of political influence is military power, either through the expectation of support or the threat of opposition. Our influence throughout the area under discussion will inevitably be reduced by our military withdrawal. But it is worth noting that in a nuclear age, there are new restrictions on the degree to which military influence can be exerted in particular by nuclear powers except defensively. Old concepts of the effectiveness of a 'fleet in being' have to be qualified by inhibitions that the actual use of force might lead to instability or to charges of neo-colonialism. Thus the credibility of the use of military force tends to be reduced. In the modern world economic strength is almost as important as military power as a source of influence.

8. In our own case any hope of maintaining our influence must depend on the strength of our economy and of the pound. To regain respect overseas we must be seen to have achieved a margin of strength to cope with unforeseen eventualities and to have reduced our degree of dependence on creditor countries and organisations. Our influence is likely to be roughly proportionate to the success we are seen to be achieving in this task.

9. Our influence can also be enhanced by what can be called 'political' power. This includes the extent to which our military and economic influence can be brought to bear more effectively by membership in the Commonwealth, and through our alliances, EFTA, and other associations and informal groupings. It is the hope of bringing our economic influence to bear more effectively in the political field that constitutes the principal motive of our application to join the EEC. Political power, in this sense, can also be affected by domestic political considerations. In general political power is a function of the credibility of a country's will to use effectively all potential sources of power.

Policies

10. Almost as important as power as a source of influence are our policies. These include not only our particular policies (commercial, political, economic, etc.) towards another country but also our more general policies, e.g. in the U.N. and other international organisations. Our relations with developed countries take in their stride the push and pull of conflicting interests. Unsophisticated developing countries are likely to be more sharply affected by single and emotional issues such as Rhodesia.

11. Good relations are not an end in themselves. Indeed there may well be occasions when influence can be more suitably exerted by firm but calculated pressure than by the friendly gesture. With the withdrawal of our forces from most overseas stations, the application of such pressure need no longer be liable to the sort

of misinterpretation which could previously have drawn us into a local armed conflict. Our interests are still sufficiently worldwide that such pressures need to be carefully calculated. But as a means of exerting influence pressure has been used successfully by other countries and should not be lightly overlooked.

General image and reputation

12. In a broader but nonetheless real way our influence abroad in every sphere is affected by the image projected by our society and by the sense we give or do not give of having a clear national purpose. It must be borne in mind that our actions will be seen in different lights in different countries. Our ideas and ideals, our reputation for tolerance, for allowing dissent, for civic virtues and for the quality of our contribution to international affairs all contribute to the respect in which the United Kingdom is held. In political terms this form of moral influence cannot be a substitute for physical power but it can complement it. At the same time, if we mismanage our race relations, if we fail to cope with our economic problems or if we greatly misjudge, either by overrating or underrating, our role in the world, our influence is bound to suffer.

Economic and commercial ties

13. The U.K.'s world-wide trading links, the expertise of the City of London, established purchasing habits, the advanced knowhow of certain British industries, Commonwealth Preferences, where they still exist, our own position as good customers, e.g. of New Zealand, private investment overseas by British concerns, are all a continuing source of commercial influence. In the Commonwealth our advantages are being diluted by the erosion of Commonwealth Preferences, by the broadening of local consumers' horizons, by our competitors' inroads, by the growth of local production, the need to look for markets outside Britain, and in Australia and New Zealand by our restrictions on investment overseas. But we still have a substantial start over our competitors.

Awareness of Britain and other ties

14. Our commercial and political influence in other countries is bound to be affected by their awareness of Britain and the picture of Britain painted by the Information media, as modified by their peoples' firsthand experience of Britain or access to other information. Our competitors are actively trying to extend their own influence through the Information media on many occasions at our expense. The widespread use of English throughout the world gives us an advantage, which is maintained by the teaching of English and other educational facilities which we provide both at home and abroad. The same goes for professional exchanges, common professional standards, common traditions and backgrounds etc. All of these features are most marked and therefore most exploitable in the Commonwealth, in particular Australia and New Zealand with whom we have virtually a common cultural identity.

Means of influence

15. As the preceding paragraphs show, our influence will depend in the main on our general performance and in particular on our success in restoring our economy. But non-military means can help to contribute to the restoration of the economy and

to the maintenance of our influence while this recovery gets under way. The following are the principal instruments at our disposal. They represent techniques of which we have made increasing use throughout the world and in which we have become increasingly skilled in the twenty years since the grant of independence to India and Pakistan.

Capital Aid

16. The aim of British aid is to help the development of those countries which need it and can use it effectively, and indirectly to secure influence for the United Kingdom, through participation in the overseas countries' development plans, the stability to which the aid contributes and the good-will towards the United Kingdom created by giving it. Capital aid can also be of commercial benefit to us (see paragraph 24 below). Our support for regional and multilateral aid organisations and for the international aid effort in general also contributes to our influence.

Technical assistance, including military and police

17. Non-military technical assistance is one of the most effective ways—and a relatively cheap one—of promoting a country's stability and development and of securing influence provided that it is properly planned and organised and that it is sustained over a period of years. Training in the U.K. and overseas, the provision or secondment of experts, sponsored visits, V.S.O.s, etc. create personal and professional contacts which spread the use of English, encourage people to buy British, secure a hearing for the British point of view and in some cases are to our direct political benefit. Technical assistance to universities, colleges, etc., is one of the most effective ways of giving aid because of the continuing links with Britain it creates.

18. Military forces can be employed on non-military tasks to further our interests. Recent experience of road building in South East Asia has shown the benefits this type of help can achieve by increasing prosperity, and helping to combat subversion in the area of the project. These tasks, which could be carried out at relatively low cost in the years before our withdrawal, together with other operations by the services such as disaster relief as a result of earthquakes, hurricanes and such like, all create a good impression in the area concerned, on which a more lasting influence can be built.

19. Technical assistance and training in the military and security field is increasingly important because of its impact on sales of British military equipment (e.g. Libya). The contribution which this makes to the effectiveness of local forces in areas from which U.K. troops have been withdrawn also assists to fill the vacuum created by our withdrawal and thereby to promote stability. Such technical assistance and training enhances our political influence, especially in view of the increasing number of military regimes, both inside and outside the Commonwealth.

20. It must, however, be recognised that the rapid expansion of the forces of underdeveloped countries and their equipment with sophisticated weapons is likely to involve the United Kingdom in a number of ways: training facilities in the United Kingdom may have to be retained beyond the needs of our own forces; and extensive and sometimes lengthy programmes of instruction in the operation of such weapons and in the training of local forces by military missions and/or seconded or loaned personnel may have to be undertaken. Although the commitment to the recipient

country is at a lower level than if we undertook their defence or stationed U.K. forces there, there is, nonetheless, a commitment, and the untimely withdrawal of U.K. key personnel would do much to undermine the very influence which we were trying to promote.

21. Technical assistance and training in the police field is another important means of promoting our direct influence and maintaining stability, especially as countries in most of the developing world are concerned with internal security and subversion as much as external threats.

Trade promotion

22. Our need for a high level of foreign exchange and for confidence in sterling prompts:—

- (a) a non-competitive concern in fostering stable conditions in sensitive areas such as the Gulf and South East Asia where we would wish to safeguard our assets and to stimulate prosperous demand; and
- (b) a competitive interest in holding on to and increasing our share of particular overseas markets.

Responsibility for competitive trade promotion must remain overwhelmingly that of business concerns themselves. But we are only holding our own for instance in Australasia, Malaysia and Singapore in absolute terms and our share of these growing markets is actually declining. Between now and 1971 businessmen will have to make urgent disposition to meet the new conditions and there are ways in which Government measures could reinforce or stimulate their efforts at carefully selected points.

23. The relevant services of the Board of Trade have recently been reinforced, following the Cromer Report, in order to co-ordinate British participation in major overseas projects. Together with the services of E.C.G.D. and of our missions abroad, these are the most obvious instruments for helping and stimulating business effort. In addition there is a case for assisting industry's own efforts to keep the British image in front of our customers, e.g. by visits by key members of overseas governments, by visits to the U.K. of groups of overseas businessmen, by subsidising export missions of British businessmen, and by more local promotions of British goods.

24. Although aid and credit facilities as well as restraints on overseas investment are directly relevant to our export record, proposals for project aid, capital aid and lines of credit have to be examined on their own merits and in the light of our own self-interest, the activities of our commercial competitors, and the recipients' own needs and requirements. Some of the countries in the areas under discussion are not looking to us for financial aid, and we have done a lot in the past years or so to extend the scope of our export credit facilities. What some of these countries would prefer is investment by British firms to set up manufacture not merely for domestic markets (many of which are small) but for the export of semi-manufactured or simpler finished goods—e.g. palm oil products from Malaysia, soft wood products from New Zealand. For the present such investment must bring quick returns to qualify under the voluntary programme but its relaxation is looked for in these areas as a sign of British re-engagement in their development. Our influence can also be increased by investment of know-how—consultants, industry scholars, joint research projects, etc.

Diplomatic representation

25. Diplomatic representation is required to execute policies resulting from the activities described in paragraphs 16–24 above and to pursue the other measures of influence described in paragraphs 26–29 below. Commercial and political and other issues abroad are so inextricably mixed that trade promotion involves all the staff of a mission from the head of the mission downwards. In addition throughout the Communist world and increasingly elsewhere large contracts and our commercial prospects depend on central governments. A real knowledge of the commercial market can only be acquired by resident representatives. Diplomatic representation cannot offset national weakness or unacceptable policies. But it is essential for effective communication with other governments. This is only possible by the head of mission and his staff (fortified by knowledge of the British scene and of the local language) gaining the confidence and trust of leaders and others and with it a real knowledge of the local political scene. It is only against this essential background knowledge that influence can be effectively exercised, and business conducted.

The British Council

26. The British Council is our main instrument for promoting the teaching of English and the organisation of professional and academic exchanges. In Commonwealth countries its work is complementary to or linked with the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship plan and the Commonwealth Foundation—both supported by the United Kingdom. English schools and universities accept overseas students as a matter of course though there is no systematic provision of British secondary education overseas.

Information work

27. Public relations are no substitute for power but, as paragraph 14 showed, it is important both for our general influence and for the promotion of our exports to counter any misrepresentations by our competitors, and to put across a positive picture of British policies and achievements. Our main instruments for doing this are our Official Information Services, comprising government information departments and the C.O.I. at home, the British Information Services overseas, and the work of Information Research Department. They work through all the information media both at home and overseas and also through sponsored visits to the U.K. and sending lecturers abroad. They are supplemented by the B.B.C.'s External Services, financed by a Government grant-in-aid, and Reuters news agency, assisted by Government payments for their news services. The personal standing and contacts of information officers in each country are particularly important.

Intelligence

28. A good Intelligence system is essential if we are to be able to form independent judgments, to act promptly with full knowledge in support of our interests, and to speak with authority on questions affecting our interests. The withdrawal of our forces, while reducing the need for certain types of precise military intelligence, will make difficulties in procuring the broad intelligence which we shall still require. The best possible intelligence liaison should be engendered with countries in areas from which we are withdrawing unilaterally in order to contribute

to the protection of our interests. Our continuing co-operation in joint intelligence activities helps to maintain our influence with our intelligence partners, especially with the U.S. and Australia, and provides them with some reassurance that we are maintaining a world-wide interest.

Support for international organisations

29. Other more general instruments which can contribute something to our influence include government support for the establishment of international bodies in the U.K. (the fact that the U.K. is the headquarters for most Commonwealth organisations is an asset). Support for international academic congresses, for faculties of international affairs in British universities and for international festivals is to our advantage, sometimes even in direct balance of payments terms. Another means of influence is exchanges of visits by Ministers and other distinguished visitors.

Technological co-operation

29a. All developed countries have an interest in technological exchanges. The fact that Britain has a great deal to offer in this respect enhances our influence. Technological ties with the United States in particular are very close. Technology will play an increasing part in our relations with Europe. Much co-operation is achieved direct between national industries as well as at a governmental level. However, formal agreements and government-to-government exchanges are of primary importance when dealing with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Technological co-operation is also important in collaboration with technical assistance in our relations with the developing world.

The need for selectivity

30. With the exception of capital aid all the instruments mentioned in the preceding paragraphs are relatively cheap. The quality of our effort, e.g. the choice of particular means and ends is often as important as the scale. Even so the effort which we could put into trying to influence or acquire the ability to influence other countries outruns our available resources. We cannot afford to be too precise in our calculations. Influence, like coral, is slow to build up and also fragile. On occasions we have to take a chance. Our continuing efforts in Libya before oil was discovered are only now being rewarded. In addition we must improve our ability to respond quickly and flexibly to new and sudden opportunities e.g. our prompt aid to Indonesia after the 1965 revolution. All these factors reinforce the need for selectivity and for concentration of our effort where it can do most good. Granted the fundamental importance of our overall performance and policies, the particular means we should concentrate on in any country will depend on a number of factors—the nature of our interests (e.g. whether we wish to put greater emphasis on our direct competitive interests or on our non-competitive interests in stability and whether we need influence in the short or longer term), the groups of people we are aiming at, our local advantages (e.g. the built-in orientation towards Britain which is particularly strong in the Old Commonwealth) or disadvantages (e.g. language barriers, the built-in colonial legends and myths in the new Commonwealth, conflicting ideologies). We now consider these factors in particular relation to the Persian Gulf, South East Asia and Australasia.

The Persian Gulf, South East Asia and Australasia

31. The following table sets out in summary form our economic interests. The very approximate figure for investment in oil in the Persian Gulf does not sufficiently illustrate the fact that 50% of West European oil and 70% of British oil companies' crude oil comes from the area, and that these companies' return to the British balance of payments in 1965 was over £200 million net. The tables also take no account of our large investment in banking and insurance in all three areas or of the areas' substantial holdings of sterling.

	<i>Figures in £ million</i>		
	<i>Persian Gulf</i>	<i>S.E.Asia</i>	<i>Australasia</i>
British investment in oil production	1000.0	50.0	—
British direct investment (1965) excluding oil, banking and insurance	—	178(4.2%)	850(20%)
Figures in brackets % of overall British investment overseas			
British exports (1967)	129(2.5%)	142(2.7%)	356(6.8%)
Figures in brackets % of total British exports			

Our military expenditure in foreign exchange for 1968–69 in those areas (all of it in South East Asia and the Persian Gulf) totals £95 million. Our current budgetary expenditure on non-military means for 1968–69 in the same areas totals approximately £17 million. In addition we shall have expenditure on capital aid of approximately £5 million (exclusive of our Special Aid for Singapore and Malaysia). Between a half and two thirds of the total £22 million may be foreign exchange expenditure.

32. Of our current expenditure which includes military and civil technical assistance, trade promotion, diplomatic representation, British Council, B.B.C., Information work, and counter-subversion, about £3½ million is spent specifically on trade promotion. But this substantially underestimates the effort devoted to trade promotion and our other immediate economic interests. As is made clear in earlier paragraphs, technical assistance, British Council and our information effort all contribute to our immediate economic interests. As a result it is impossible to quantify precisely the proportion of our overall non-military effort that is devoted respectively to our immediate economic interests and to our longer term interests in stability, etc. In broad terms a reasonable estimate would be that our immediate interests account for between a third and a half of this expenditure. Annex I sets out the figures for our interests and expenditure in greater detail.¹

33. In all the areas under consideration our economic interests are matched by substantial political interests. In the Persian Gulf and South East Asia the smooth withdrawal of our forces and the avoidance of military involvement depend on continuing stability and prosperity. In both areas we are interested in restricting the increase of Soviet (and in South East Asia Chinese) influence. In both we shall need overflying rights and staging facilities. In the Persian Gulf Iran is of particular importance. In South East Asia our own as well as the United States economic prospects depend on the reduction if not termination of U.S. involvement in

¹ Not printed.

Vietnam. But in the longer term it is important that this should not lead to U.S. disenchantment or complete withdrawal from South East Asia. The situation in Thailand post-Vietnam will be critical for Malaysia and the Western position in South East Asia. Indonesia with a growing population of over 100 million and a strategic position in relation to Australasia as well as Malaysia, will become increasingly important in the longer term. In Australia and New Zealand our political interests are that they should be willing to contribute to a 'forward defence policy' for South East Asia and should continue their general support for British policies in the Commonwealth, at the United Nations and in international affairs in general. Above all, our interest in all three areas is to maintain our present relatively favourable commercial position in the face of our competitors, in particular Japan, Germany, France and the U.S.A.

34. In the following paragraphs we consider briefly the prospects for each of these interests in all three areas.

Persian Gulf

35. In the Persian Gulf stability and our direct interests are threatened by the territorial claims of Iran and Saudi Arabia against the Protected Gulf States, by the Shah's ambitions to step into Britain's shoes and Saudi determination to resist him, and by the possibility of Saudi-Iranian confrontation. As a result we cannot afford to choose between the Arabs and Iran. In the Arab countries there is a growing danger of internal pressures by increasingly sophisticated populations against autocratic shaikhly rule. In Bahrain our military withdrawal will entail an annual loss to Bahrain of £5 million income. If stability seems uncertain, if the broadening of traditional administrations does not progress sufficiently fast, if attempts to unite the smaller states founder on local jealousies, then subversion supported by, among others, the revolutionary Arab regimes may become dangerously active. Iraqi claims to Kuwait might be revived.

36. Other threats to our interests include the possibility of a revival of right-wing nationalism in Iran or of the Iranians being attracted by the charms of closer trading links with the Communist bloc. But provided Gulf affairs do not cause trouble, it seems more likely that Iran will continue to be relatively favourable to British interests. The same goes for Saudi Arabia. In Iraq, however, the military regime has become, if anything, more extreme in the last year or so and it seems unlikely that this trend will be reversed.

South East Asia

37. We cannot yet foresee the outcome of the Vietnam war. A U.S. withdrawal from South Vietnam accompanied by retention of their positions elsewhere will probably have little effect except in Vietnam itself, in Laos and possibly in Cambodia. U.S. withdrawal from the mainland, if accompanied by a continuing U.S. presence on the periphery and a continuing commitment to defend non-communist states that wish it against external attack, will not have a very different effect. But a complete loss of U.S. interest in South East Asia would have a critical effect on Thailand, and probably Malaysia and Singapore, would contribute to instability in Indonesia, and would have a demoralising effect in Australia. We have to plan for the best, while recognising the risks that our plans may be nullified by events beyond our control.

38. Vietnam aside, there are some signs that the prospects for growth and

stability in South East Asia are improving. In the last few years the area has shown an unexpected resilience and indigenous strength. There are movements towards closer regional co-operation. In Indonesia, despite immense political and economic difficulties, Soeharto² has shown great skill in beginning to repair the ravages of Soekarno's regime. Given continuing support from outside there is probably a better than even chance of precarious stability being maintained and of there being no resurgence of Soekarno's nationalist policies, or of Chinese or Soviet influence. Given good relations with Indonesia the main threats to our interests in Malaysia and Singapore are their own rivalry, internal racial conflict between Malay and Chinese communities, communist subversion in East Malaysia, and, especially in Singapore, the possibility of economic depression after our military withdrawal. But so far at any rate these problems seem manageable, although our influence in the two countries has been further eroded by our application to join the E.E.C.

39. Other threats to the area include Communist-supported insurgency and subversion in Thailand and Burma. In both countries this is likely to be contained. Insurgency in Thailand has led the Government into undertaking economically invigorating measures, particularly in the less developed parts of the country, but in Burma the effect has been to accelerate economic decline. Throughout the area the Chinese will continue trying to increase their influence. The Soviet Union will take an increasing interest in the area but to some extent will be a force for stability because of their hostility to China. In the Philippines continuing maladministration and maldistribution of wealth may throw some strain on the political system.

40. From the point of view of direct British interests the countries of South East Asia are disparate. There is no single underlying factor. Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines are all important to us in different ways. In Burma our interests are small and there seems little chance in the foreseeable future that we can improve the situation. Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam have no commercial potential for us. For the time being our interests (mainly in good relations with our allies) make it worthwhile to make a substantial effort in these countries. Political interests and our obligations as co-chairman of the Geneva Conference may make it necessary for us to continue this effort as a way of facilitating a settlement. But in the longer run and given a reasonable settlement it seems likely that Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam will have a lower priority, though admittedly for humanitarian reasons we may wish to continue assistance to Vietnam. It is possible that we may gain some advantage from the massive rehabilitation aid Vietnam is likely to receive. In our own commercial interest, to help maintain our influence with the United States and to retain U.S. interest in South East Asia, and for the benefit of the riparian states there will be a case for contributing to the regional development of the Mekong basin, if events lead in this direction.

Australasia

41. Our exports to (and our imports from) Australia and New Zealand have remained static in the past few years despite the expansion of their total trade and domestic economies. Among the reasons for this are developing Australian production (often financed by British capital), the lifting of Australian licensing controls, which often discriminated in our favour, and their substitution by a highly

² See 19, note 2.

protective tariff, and, the desire for diversification in overseas trade. But the main reason and the main threat to our commercial interests is keener competition from Japan, the United States and others. There is scope for further investment by British capital but we are seriously handicapped by our 'Voluntary Programme' of restrictions. In both the political and economic sphere our links have been weakened by increasing Australian and New Zealand preoccupation with the Indo-Pacific area, immigration from continental Europe, by British immigration control, devaluation and by Britain's bid to enter the E.E.C., and deliberate choice of a European policy and military withdrawal from East of Suez. But despite these undoubted handicaps, our enormous interests are still matched by great advantages—common language, British origin, common allegiance to the Crown etc.

Conclusions

42. We have substantial interests in all the areas under consideration but their nature is changing. Both for our own sake and because of the need to maintain good relations with the United States, Australia and New Zealand, considerations of general security and stability must continue to play some part in determining our policy. But we must also do what we can to disengage from local problems and concentrate on our direct and in particular our economic interests. This has implications for our non-military effort.

43. Subject to whatever decisions we take about our general capability, our military withdrawal will remove our capability to play a significant part in determining developments in the Persian Gulf or South East Asia. Our political influence will be reduced and the nature of our influence will change from that of a power with a global military role to one with worldwide economic interests. We need to maintain these interests if we are going to restore our economic position. Our military presence has not been the only reason for the well-being of our interests up to now. They have prospered in part because of hard-headed calculation of benefit on both sides and in part because of the non-military effort which we already put into the areas. Subject to the fundamental importance of our economic performance and our policies in the areas in question, we believe that these existing and well-tried non-military means offer the best prospect of maintaining our influence and so contributing to our economic recovery and that our present effort, which is being financed within the ceilings agreed by our colleagues, should continue. A reduction in our non-military effort could only aggravate the damage done by our military withdrawal.

44. We also believe that our effort should be increased in certain directions. Our withdrawal from the *Persian Gulf* and our interest in maintaining our influence and continuing stability there may necessitate consideration of special aid analogous to that given to Singapore and Malaysia. This could include measures to help Bahrain diversify its economy and increased technical assistance in particular in the military field. *In South East Asia* the main emphasis of any additional measures should be on technical assistance, trade promotion and in one or two cases capital aid. We should also consider the provision of secondary education in English. In both of these areas we think that programmes of military technical assistance and training can make a potent contribution to our influence. *In Australasia* (and in South East Asia) we need over the next few years visible demonstrations of our continuing interest and we should among other things encourage more professional business and student exchanges.

45. In all three areas we should consider how best to strengthen the effort we put into trade promotion, and stepping up the commercial activities of our missions. The following are examples of the kind of technique which can be used:—

- (i) An increase in the number of British Government invitations to ministers from purchasing departments of other countries to visit installations and manufacturers in Britain in sectors of interest to them;
- (ii) Organising more inward missions (at business expense) either by group interests with shopping lists (e.g. hospitals, hotel chains, development agencies) or individuals in influential advisory positions;
- (iii) Subsidising (through BNEC) export missions either on the conventional lines from Chambers of Commerce or particular industrial groupings or alternatively for example to survey the case for projects such as new freight schemes, joint warehousing/distribution facilities, group marketing ventures;
- (iv) More store promotions overseas of British goods.

Other useful measures, which would require organisation and selective redeployment of our resources, rather than additional government expenditure, include:—

- (i) taking any opportunities for placing British personnel in key positions of influence (e.g. consultancy retainers);
- (ii) the best possible deployment of the scholarships offered to foreign graduates for further training in British industry;
- (iii) examining the possibility of joint research and development projects.

46. In sum we believe our colleagues will agree that we must continue to do all we can to protect and promote our very substantial economic interests in the three areas under discussion over the next five years. We believe that it will be in our overall interest in this period slightly to increase our non-military effort. Our objective will also be to develop greater flexibility and to ensure that as our economic recovery progresses we are in the best position to take advantage of it.

156 CAB 148/35, OPD 14(68)4 26 July 1968
 ‘Non-military means of influence in the Persian Gulf, South-East Asia and Australasia’: Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee minutes

The Committee considered a memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs (OPD (68) 44) (Revise)¹ on the non-military means by which our influence may be maintained and strengthened in those areas outside Europe from which it has been decided to withdraw our forces.

The Foreign Secretary said that the revised paper before the Committee took account of the views of the President of the Board of Trade and the Minister of Technology. It drew attention to our very substantial interests in the areas from which we were withdrawing and the need for us to maintain, as far as possible, the

¹ See 155.

influence which we had previously exerted there and which had been buttressed, though not created, by our military presence. The principal instruments at our disposal for this purpose included capital aid, technical assistance, trade promotion, diplomatic representation and the British Council. Since we had not the resources to exert our effort everywhere at once, we must be selective and adjust our approach to the needs of each country on its merits, bearing in mind that we could often not hope for results in the short term. Both for our own sake and because of the need to maintain good relations with the United States, Australia and New Zealand, considerations of general security and stability must continue to play some part in determining our policy. But we must also do what we could to disengage from local problems and concentrate on our direct and, in particular our economic, interests. It was worth noting in this context that 50 per cent of West European oil and 70 per cent of British oil companies' crude oil came from the Persian Gulf, that these companies' return to the British balance of payments in 1965 was over £200 million net, and that we had approximately £1,000 million invested in oil there. About 25 per cent of our total direct investment overseas, excluding oil, banking and insurance, was accounted for by the three areas dealt with in the paper, and they took some 12 per cent of our exports. The precise measures required to increase our influence would need further study. In the Persian Gulf, it was possible that special aid analogous to that given to Singapore and Malaysia might be necessary. In South-East Asia the main emphasis should be on technical assistance, trade promotion and some capital aid and in Australasia and South-East Asia we should, over the next few years at least, need visible demonstrations of our continuing interest. In all three areas we should consider how best to strengthen the efforts we put into trade promotion and stepping up the commercial activities of our Missions. We must continue to protect and promote our very substantial economic interests in these areas over the next five years and it would be in our overall interest slightly to increase our non-military effort in this period.

The Commonwealth Secretary strongly supported the views put forward by the Foreign Secretary and said that the period of our withdrawal was the worst possible time to make cuts in our non-military forms of influence in the areas.

*The President of the Board of Trade*² was in general agreement with the Foreign Secretary's remarks, though he was not sure whether the paper before the Committee gave enough emphasis to commercial, as opposed to political, representation. He emphasised the need for selectivity and the fact that increased effort need not necessarily be directed to precisely those areas from which we were withdrawing our troops. The criterion should be where greater effort would be most useful. He strongly agreed that this was not the time to press for economies in non-military means of maintaining our influence.

In discussion, the point was made that our forces would not have completed their withdrawal until the end of 1971 and that the economic situation would continue to be critical in the intervening period. This would make it impossible to agree to any increase in our non-military effort before the full savings from our military withdrawal had been achieved. For the same reason, there could be no question of special aid to the Persian Gulf, on the scale of that agreed for Singapore and Malaysia. There might be a case for increasing our non-military effort in certain areas. But the

² Anthony Crosland.

paper before the Committee was designed to set the general scene and was not detailed enough to enable the Committee to take reasoned decisions. More work was needed on the various aspects of the problem; and detailed studies were necessary to establish the cost-effectiveness from our point of view of specific projects in particular countries. It was already noticeable that one of the results of our decision to withdraw from the Persian Gulf and the Far East had been a substantial increase in our orders of arms to these areas. Another field in which we were already active and where there might be a case for expanding our effort when conditions allowed, was technical assistance and especially consultancy arrangements which often led later on to commercial contracts.

The Prime Minister, summing up the discussion, said that the Committee noted the paper with general approval. They also noted the reservations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to any increase in expenditure in the non-military field and the need not to prejudice the reviews of our expenditure on overseas representation and on overseas information services which were already in hand. Further studies should now be undertaken by officials on an interdepartmental basis. In these studies special attention should be paid to our commercial interests, including the possibility of increased arms sales. The aim should be to bring before Ministers in due course a set of specific proposals which could be shown to be justifiable in our interests on a cost effectiveness basis; no assumptions should be made, either way, on the availability of financial resources. He would arrange for the necessary studies to be put in hand.

The Committee:—

Took note with approval of the Prime Minister's summing up of their discussion.

157 FCO 49/21, no 29 30 Oct 1968
 'Priorities by country for British interests throughout the world until the mid-70's': letter from E N Larmour¹ (FCO) to R L Wade-Gery² (Cabinet Office). *Enclosure*

When Sir Morrice James was giving evidence to the Committee on 2 October, he mentioned that the Foreign Office and Commonwealth Office were working on the tentative and unofficial ranking of Foreign and Commonwealth countries in terms of their importance to British interests. I am now sending you informally five numbered copies of a highly provisional paper embodying the progress which has been made so far with this idea.

2. We wish to stress strongly that this paper, as it stands, is only 'work in progress'. It has been seen by some senior officials, and considered in a preliminary manner by the (former) Foreign Office Planning Committee; but neither its method nor its conclusions have been approved by officials, let alone Ministers. In the next few months, we hope to improve and refine the ideas in the paper and, as necessary,

¹ Deputy secretary to governor of Burma, 1947; CRO from 1948; minister, UK high Commission, Nigeria, 1964–1967; deputy chief of administration, FCO, 1968–1970; high commissioner, Jamaica and non-resident ambassador to Haiti, 1970–1973.

² Foreign/Diplomatic Service from 1951; Cabinet Office, 1968–1969; head of Financial Policy and Aid Dept, FCO, 1969–1971.

revise the conclusions. We are sending it to you now because our progress so far suggests that analysis of this sort will be of use to us and we believe this paper may therefore be of interest to you at an early stage in your Committee's work. It is consistent with the Plowden Committee's³ recommendation (Command 2276, paragraph 223) that 'wherever possible, attempts should be made to evaluate in quantitative as well as qualitative terms the likely consequences of alternative courses of action'.

3. May I also stress the point made in paragraph 12 of the paper? Even when we have refined our methods, the list of countries by order of priority will never be an automatic tool for deciding priorities in any particular area of policy or administration. It will always be necessary to take into account special considerations affecting the allocation of resources to particular countries and to particular kinds of overseas effort (e.g. the demands of public opinion).

4. As you will readily appreciate, the paper, and in particular the grading of individual countries, is a particularly sensitive subject. Any leakage could cause really serious trouble. We should therefore be grateful if you could arrange to keep all the copies of the paper in the Cabinet Office. We realise that it may be somewhat inconvenient for members of the Committee to have to read the paper at the Cabinet Office and we apologise for this. But the paper is obviously a potential cause of serious international embarrassment if there were any leakage of its contents. This is why we have marked it Secret and why we must request special precautions.

5. We are not showing the paper to any other Whitehall departments until we have done more work on it.

6. If, in the end, the Committee should wish to refer in their report to the work done along these lines, we would ask that we should be consulted on how any such reference should be phrased.

Enclosure to 157

The aim of this paper is to establish for the period up to about 1975 a rough scale of priorities for British interests, country by country, throughout the world in the light of their relative political, economic and defence importance to H.M. Government. The purpose is not to argue for new policies but, on the basis of the principles of policy now generally established as a result of our recent decision to be Europe-based and to withdraw from East of Suez, to assess the relative importance to our interests of foreign and Commonwealth independent countries. Colonies are not considered and Rhodesia is excluded as a special case. A number of colonies have intrinsic importance for us (e.g. Hong Kong) but in all cases our attitude to them is determined by our sovereign responsibilities. Of course in several cases these responsibilities affect our relations with independent States, e.g. the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar and Hong Kong.

Basic assumptions

2. The basic assumptions of policy have been described in a separate paper. In sum they are that the United Kingdom is no longer a power with automatic

³ See 170, note 5.

commitments throughout the world, and that the state of our economy is such that particularly in the next few years we must maximise advantage to our balance of payments. Europe is the centre of our policy, but we are an outward-looking European/Atlantic Power. Our interests, in particular in the economic sphere, are still more widespread than those of Germany, Japan or France. In seeking short-term economic benefits we must endeavour not to prejudice our long-term interest both economic and political. This means not only concerning ourselves with our direct interests (trade promotion etc.), but also doing what we can with the resources available to us to promote security and stability, especially in those countries where these are threatened and where our economic interests are great. Our past experience, and the fact that we have had close ties with almost all the countries of the world, will continue to be of great value to us. We have continuing interests and commitments in the Commonwealth. Moreover, if the United Nations is to continue to have any importance in the world, our role as a Permanent Member of the Security Council remains of great significance.

Method

3. The paper attempts to assess our priorities on as objective and as quantitative a basis as possible. This is in line with the need for efficiency imposed on us by our limited resources. The methods used are simple, and in some cases crude. While our economic interests lend themselves to some extent to quantitative analysis, numerical values can only be allotted to political interests on a subjective basis. All the same, the allocation of numerical values to political interests has the advantage of compelling us to judge our interests in different countries by similar standards and gives us a rough and ready way of comparing our economic and political interests. In terms of method as well as product the paper is only the first step in a long process. It will take a great deal of work and time to develop a fully acceptable way of establishing our scale of priorities on a rational basis. It is worth doing this. In the meantime the present embryonic attempt may be of use to the Committee on Overseas Representation.

Criteria for assessing a country's importance to the U.K.

Economic considerations

4. A country's economic importance to us is best measured by our total economic involvement with it. This can be expressed by adding up the total flow of payments in both directions. In this sum exports and imports, i.e. the visible trade flow, are the most important factor. Other factors include invisible exports and imports (shipping, aviation, remittances, Government expenditure and other services), and the flow of capital (including a country's power to affect sterling, whether as a holder of sterling balances or as a potential foreign currency supporter of the £). The figures for the total flow of payments in both directions will not, of course, include the capital value of our investments overseas or other countries' investments in the U.K. But the inclusion of figures for remittances, profits on investments etc. in the estimate of the total flow ensures that the economic importance of these investments is taken into account.

5. It may be argued that using our total economic involvement with any country as a measure of its economic importance obscures its real importance and that we should concentrate on the British side of the balance, i.e. on our own exports, foreign holdings of Sterling, British investments in the country concerned, British invisible exports, and a country's importance to us as a source of raw materials. It is true that in the short-term and at a time when the restoration of a surplus in our balance of payments is the prime objective of policy, the British side of the ledger is the most important. Moreover, it can be argued that, however large our imports from any country, we can almost always get what we require from another source if this becomes necessary. However, given the continuing need for this country to import some 90 per cent of its raw materials and 50 per cent of its food supplies and since we could not switch all our sources of imports, it seems more realistic to include both sides of the balance in measuring a country's importance to us.

6. It may also be argued that we should exclude Government expenditure from this measure. One of the purposes of establishing a scale of priorities is to help decide British policy. Government expenditure is an expression of policy. To include it in the measure may seem a way of building in the *status quo*. The difficulty is that, if we exclude Government expenditure, we should also exclude those items of our exports which are financed by Government expenditure. However we embark on this process of disentanglement, it is difficult to know where to stop. For the time being, at any rate, the best answer seems to be to stick to those elements of the balance which are dealt with in the annual balance of payments accounts.

Political (including national security) considerations

7. First there are considerations affecting our national security, in particular the degree to which countries are likely or able directly to affect the security of the British Isles. In this sense a direct security threat means the domination of the United Kingdom by a hostile power or the risk of widespread destruction or annihilation as a result of global war. Countries are important to us in this respect in so far as they have the power to promote or prevent such a state of affairs.

8. In addition, a country can be important to us in political terms because of our Treaty or moral obligations to it, because it is a member of the Commonwealth, because of the effect of internal developments in that country on our local interests, because of its effect on countries surrounding it, because our policy towards it may have wider repercussions, because it is a scene of conflict between other powers not directly affecting the security of the British Isles, because of our need for its support for British policies, e.g. in respect of our Common Market candidature, and in other ways. We also take into account the degree to which countries can contribute to our general aims, e.g. disarmament, the United Nations and the general aspirations of British policy for a freer and more peaceable world. Another factor is the need to give protection to British communities overseas.

Potential

9. In attempting to assess each country's importance to us, this paper is not concerned with the threats to our interests. Consideration of threats and of other probable developments comes later when we are trying to decide what policy should be and what resources to deploy. Nevertheless both in the economic and the political field assessment of a country's importance needs to give weight to potential, i.e. the

possible opportunities for British interests and a country's power to affect us. Assessment of a country's potential is a matter of judgement and detailed information. However a crude single measure is provided by gross domestic product. And this might at a later stage in this exercise be combined with a figure for annual growth. The advantage of using gross domestic product as a measure of potential is that it is an objective yardstick and that it can be said to apply both in the economic and the political field. In the modern world a country's political strength depends as much on its economic as on its military power.

10. A further general point is that countries cannot be looked at in isolation. Events in a country where there are few British interests (e.g. Burma and Algeria) may have effects on larger British interests outside its borders. Moreover countries may need to be assessed higher than they intrinsically deserve because of their regional significance. North Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Latin America, South East Asia, Eastern Europe are all cases where the whole region may be more important than the sum of its parts. Attempts to establish broad priorities of interests between regions, at any rate outside the European Atlantic area, founder on the fact that they take insufficient account of the unique circumstances of individual countries, but this is not to say that we do not need to allow for regional interests.

Assignment of priorities

11. In the light of the considerations in the previous paragraphs and on the basis of the detailed analysis in Annex 1 and the tables⁴ with it, the table in paragraph 13 lists all the countries in the world in order of their relative importance to British interests overall. It is arguable that at a later stage it will be necessary to include regions and possibly some international organizations and alliances in the list as well but for the time being they have been excluded.

12. It does not follow from the position of a country in the following list that the size of the resources allocated for a particular overseas activity (e.g. information work) or policy should necessarily appear in the same order. The table cannot be an exact guide to the priorities we should follow in planning our various activities and policies overseas. The priorities for diplomatic representation will differ from the priorities for information work, trade promotion or British Council work, and so on. Some countries offer more fruitful fields for British endeavour than others, e.g. because of the existence of Commonwealth or other historical links or because of better prospects for economic growth. We also have to take account of the threats to our interests in any given case. We have furthermore to decide how we should strike the balance between the broader interest in stability and peaceful change which we share with our allies and our narrower competitive concern to promote direct British interests, particularly in the commercial field. The extent to which our friends and allies are already defending general Western interests will be a factor. We have to decide whether we wish to do something to protect and promote British interests even when they are as small as those in the lowest groups in the table or whether we wish to concentrate our efforts where the prizes seem more worthwhile. In any given case, Parliamentary interest and the pressure of British public opinion also have to be taken into account.

⁴ The Annex and tables to this paper are not reproduced here but see the diagrammatic summary.

13.

<i>A</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E (cont)</i>
U.S.A.	Rumania	Laos
Soviet Union	Finland	Botswana
	Brazil	Guatemala
<i>B</i>	Ghana	Lebanon
Germany (F.R.)*	Hungary	Colombia
Canada	Cuba	Lesotho
France	Tanzania	<i>F</i>
Netherlands	Jordan	South Yemen
Australia	Portugal	Somali Republic
Italy	Malta	Bolivia
Belgium	Jamaica	Uruguay
India	Saudi Arabia	Ecuador
South Africa	Chile	Gambia
Denmark	Algeria	Ivory Coast
China	Iraq	Malagasy Republic
Norway	Mexico	Burma
Japan	Thailand	Liberia
Sweden	Bulgaria	Albania
New Zealand	Ceylon	Senegal
Ireland	Venezuela	Afghanistan
Iran	Philippines	Cameroon
Turkey	Guyana	Tunisia
Malaysia	Ethiopia	Costa Rica
Germany (D.D.R.)	Iceland	Dominican Republic
	Malawi	El Salvador
<i>C</i>	Trinidad	Guinea
Czechoslovakia	Uganda	Panama
Pakistan	Mauritius	Paraguay
Singapore		Yemen
Libya	<i>E</i>	
U.A.R.	Morocco	<i>G</i>
Israel	Barbados	Burundi
Poland	Brunei	Central African Republic
Kenya	Sudan	Chad
Bahrain, Qatar & Trucial States	Formosa	Congo (Dom. Rep. of)
Zambia	South Korea	Dahomey
Austria	Nepal	Gabon
Greece	North Viet-Nam	Haiti
Nigeria	Syria	Honduras
Switzerland	Congo (Rep. of)	Mali
Yugoslavia	Muscat & Oman	Mauritania
Spain	South Viet-Nam	Mongolia
Kuwait	Sierra Leone	Nicaragua
Cyprus	Peru	Niger
Indonesia	Swaziland	Rwanda
Argentina	North Korea	Togo
	Cambodia	Upper Volta

* Berlin is not listed separately because economic statistics for Berlin are not recorded separately but included in statistics for the Federal Republic of Germany.

14. The Annex describes the detailed computations on which this list is based. The method of awarding marks is bound to be arbitrary, in particular on the political side, and the application of the method to be somewhat subjective. Under all the three main headings in the Annex—Economic, Political, and GDP—the United States has been allotted 100 and other countries values expressed as a percentage of the United States. There is no doubt of the United States supreme importance to us. According to the marking the Soviet Union is in second place closely followed by Germany. Nevertheless it seems right that, as the second Super Power and because of the capacity it shares with the U.S.A. to destroy the world by nuclear annihilation, the Soviet Union should, together with the United States, be declared, as it were, *hors concours* and placed in a separate group at the head of the list.

15. There are several features of the analysis for which there is no intrinsic logic and which cannot be justified in exact terms: e.g. the weighting of the various elements of the political analysis, the equal three-way division between economic interests, political interests and GDP, the simple addition of the three columns rather than any more sophisticated method, etc. All these points are open to argument and considerable improvement. At the same time we must emphasise our belief that our overseas interests need to be judged by roughly these criteria. It is also important to stress that, while the tables in paragraph 13 above and the Annex have been built up by quasi-statistical means, the order of priorities should be regarded mainly as a ‘visual aid’ and as establishing in broad outline a number of groups of countries in descending order of importance to overall British interests, and not as creating an exact order of precedence.

16. Nevertheless, even after allowing for these reservations, it seems likely that the basic foundation for deciding the priorities of each type of our overseas activities and our overseas policies must be an assessment of overall priorities country by country. The problem is not whether we should make such an assessment but how we can best develop one on a rational, objective and quantitative basis. This paper is intended as a first step in that direction.

158 FCO 49/24, no 27

9 Apr 1969

‘“Priorities”: country by country’: minute by J R A Bottomley for FCO Planning Staff

[The ‘priorities’ survey by the FCO Planning Staff proceeded through a number of drafts, to which various tabular statements, often of several pages, were attached. The table to which Bottomley refers in the minute below falls into this category, and it is not reproduced here. Bottomley was sceptical about the value of the exercise, and his arguments can be followed without the tables to which they refer.]

I return herewith the table attached to Departmental Circular 55/69 of 31 March, with my amendments.

2. I should record that I do this in a sense ‘under protest’, since with great respect I do not consider that this kind of calculation can be made in any meaningful way. In other words, I think that the factors which are being quantified and added together are incommensurable—like half an hour and a yard of cloth, or the side and the diagonal of a square. Obviously, British interests are much more heavily involved in some countries than in others; but I just do not believe that they can be reduced to

figures—to pretend to do so may look very ‘numerate’ and up-to-date, but is in fact pseudo-scientific and likely to mislead if any use is later made of the results.

3. Moreover, I do not accept that the weightings given to the four columns in the attached table are necessarily right; nor the decision to give equal weight to the politico-security criterion and each of the two economic criteria.

4. Coming from the general rather closer to the particular, it seems to me wrong that any member of the United Nations should be rated zero for ‘political importance’. And I think this is even more true of those countries who happen at any given moment to be, or to be about to become, members of the Security Council. A special case is Formosa, which in theory could exercise a veto in the Security Council, though I imagine that in practice this would never be done. But Formosa’s vote is often of considerable importance to us when African questions come up in the Security Council and we are trying to accumulate sufficient abstentions to block a mandatory resolution without having to veto it. The fact that we have no diplomatic relations with Formosa is relevant, but does not alter the fact that here is a country of real political importance to us.

5. From the markings given in the table circulated, I have the impression that both ‘political importance’ and ‘national security’ are calculated too much on a particular country’s direct importance to the British Isles, ignoring the indirect importance a country may have for us by reason of its importance in respect of a country which is in turn important to us. I think that this is true for example of both the two countries first named in the table, Afghanistan (via Pakistan) and Albania (via China and Russia).

6. It further seems to me that ‘national security’ ought to take account of the importance to us of certain countries as suppliers of essential materials. That importance is not necessarily covered by the ‘total economic involvement’ criterion, since some commodities are of much greater strategic importance than others. Thus, it seems to me odd that Bahrain and the Trucial States get zero for national security, and Kuwait only one under this heading, in spite of the importance of the oil supplies we draw from them; likewise over Zambia as a source of copper.

7. The treatment of the Dependent and Associated Territories seems to me unrealistic. In particular, surely Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands deserve more significance under ‘political importance’ than to be lumped under the solitary unit allotted to the Dependencies other than Rhodesia and Hong Kong. And indeed, although Anguilla may be regarded as a short-lived freak, one surely has to recognise that the probabilities are that our other Dependencies must be expected to produce political problems of comparable importance in more years than not. I do not accept the validity of the argument in paragraph 4(b) of the guidance notes, for the exclusion of the factor of British Parliamentary and public opinion. This exclusion seems to me unrealistic. But in any case, questions like Gibraltar, the Falkland Islands and Anguilla have a substantial impact on our political interests throughout the world even without counting their impact on British Parliamentary and public opinion.

8. Despite what is said in paragraph 4(e) of the Guidance Notes, there seems to me to be a need to distinguish between the various countries’ *actual* importance at this present moment, and what it is forecast that their future importance is likely to be; with, in the latter case, an indication of what period of time is being considered. To take an example, I think that 16 might be a fair forecast of Japan’s political

importance in 10 or even 5 years' time. But I think that it is a great exaggeration of Japan's political importance right now. Contrariwise, I think that the political importance attributed to many of the African countries is seriously underestimated if one considers the dangers in which we might in a few years' time find ourselves involved as a result of a black-white struggle in Southern Africa in the not so very distant future. Another example of the same problem relates to certain of the Western European countries. So long as France is able and determined to block our entry into the E.E.C., I do not see why countries like Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands should be rated so high under 'political importance'. Their rating would no doubt be justified if one were looking forward to a time when French determination or ability to block our entry was somewhat reduced (though if that is the timescale envisaged, is not the French rating itself unduly high?). This difficulty over timing is yet another reason why I disbelieve in the validity of this kind of attempt to set these considerations down in precise-looking figures. Such figures are likely to give the impression of having been produced by computation from exact data, and to represent the 'quantity' of importance to us of the various other countries in the world (if they are not to be regarded in this way, what are they for?). That impression is untrue, misleading and a potential source of error.

159 FCO 49/245, no 53

12 June 1969

'Priorities exercise': FCO draft notes for use by Sir D Greenhill at a meeting of permanent secretaries

I. Background and objectives

In recent years Britain's changing world rôle and need for economy in overseas expenditure has led us to seek a means of judging our interests throughout the world, which could serve as a rough yardstick for judging priorities in overseas expenditure and commitments.

Examples of occasions when we felt this need: requests for defence commitments (Mauritius, British Honduras, Malaysia); assessment in the FCO of requests from different countries for aid; balancing commercial and political considerations (butter quotas, wheat import prices, etc.); information and other estimates; competitive demands for additional staff in various parts of the world. New urgency injected into work already in progress in 1968 by:—

- (i) definition of Britain's new rôle in January White Paper;
- (ii) constitution of Duncan Committee.¹

Our general aim has been to clear our minds about the nature and distribution of our overseas interests. More specifically the objective is to assess British national interest in each country and arrange a graded list. To do this one has to make certain assumptions. These are set out in the paper. The essential assumption is that it is possible sensibly to compare political and economic interests by using figures. Important that these figures have no *real* significance. They merely depict, in an easily graspable way, a series of judgments about our interests in the world.

¹ Sir V Duncan, chairman and chief executive of Rio Tinti-Zinc Corporation, chairman of Review Committee on Overseas Representation, 1969.

II. *Method*

On the assumption that political and economic interests can be compared in a meaningful way, there are various ways of combining them. We started off with three equal criteria, political, security and economic interests. This seemed to underestimate economic interests and give insufficient weighting to potential. Existing method gives equal weighting to economic interests, political interests and potential.

(a) *Economic interests*

For reasons given in the paper present economic column based on total economic involvement, taken to be the sum of all our current economic transactions in both directions. Arguable whether export side balance should be given higher weighting. But importance of overseas supplies of raw materials and food to Britain and difficulty of devising and justifying separate weighting suggest best method at present to include exports and imports equally.

(b) *Political interests*

Once criterion decided economic column a matter of compilation. Political column bound to be a matter of judgment.

One of the problems of method is how if at all should political interests be subdivided? Here there are two possible methods:—

(i) to rely on general sense or hunch or

(ii) to sub-divide political interest so as to give markers more rigid framework.

Second method adopted since, although artificial and imprecise, it tends to reduce the element of subjective hunch.

(c) *Potential*

Ideally we need to try to assess the relative ability of different countries over future years to affect our interests, basing this assessment on current strength combined with probable rates of growth, which may be affected by unforeseeable developments, e.g. the discovery of oil in areas previously thought to be devoid of it. The present strength of a country can best be judged in terms of G.D.P., which can serve as a measure of both political and economic potential. No attempt has been made to crystal gaze, although the possibility of building in some estimate of future rates of growth based on past trends is being considered.

III. *Interim results*

The main results of the exercise so far are first to confirm that outside the Atlantic/European area, we have major interests in only a few countries, viz. Australia, New Zealand, Japan, India, South Africa, the Middle East and the Persian Gulf; and secondly that we have very small interests in a large number of countries.

To a large extent the priorities represent the implications of the January 1968 decisions—not an independent confirmation of them. Indeed the table is always likely to follow fundamental government overseas policies. Nevertheless on an informal basis, by illustrating inconsistencies or highlighting new developments, it may, if it is used regularly, have a feed-back into basic policy by suggesting that its own basic assumptions are out of line. And the results so far suggest that the paper could be a useful tool for achieving a consistent overall view of our interests overseas in the light of basic assumptions of government policy. The paper emphasizes that we are seeking to illustrate distribution of Britain's overseas interests and *not*

directly to determine the distribution of Britain's overseas effort. Distribution of interests will differ from distribution of effort in so far as scope for protection of interests is affected by special factors in relation to particular kinds of effort. For instance diplomatic effort in China cannot at present match potential importance to Britain of developments there.

IV. *Future uses*

We should be grateful to know:—

- (i) whether other Departments agree that an approach along these lines may be useful;
- (ii) how they think we should take it further.

Our own view is that a paper on these lines could become a useful background document for a wide range of decisions throughout the international affairs field, though as we have emphasised it could never be applied directly. If so, we should need the machinery for inter-departmental agreement on it. The best way of doing this might be to set up a Committee of Under-Secretaries to supervise further action on the paper. This Committee could set up a small working group drawn from the Economists Department and the Planning Staff of the F.C.O. and appropriate divisions in other Ministries. The task of the Committee would be to prepare a paper for approval by Permanent Secretaries. This would improve the methodology as well as reaching agreement on substance.

Such an arrangement would closely parallel the recommendations which the Output Budgeting Group are expected to put to Permanent Secretaries in a month or so. The Priorities Paper is likely to be of direct relevance to the Output Budgeting exercise. Although we shall not wish to fuse the two tasks completely, I think there will be strong arguments for having the same Committee supervise both and having a large common element in the working groups dealing with both subjects.

If this is agreed, I suggest that the F.C.O. should prepare the proposed terms of reference for the inter-departmental work and that we should aim to take decisions about it in conjunction with decisions reached on Output Budgeting.

Limitations and criticisms

Our work has encountered a good deal of criticism within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Briefly this has taken three forms.

First there has been criticism on the general lines that we are attempting the impossible: that our interests cannot be quantified in a manner which appears precise but which is in fact pseudo-scientific; that it is impossible to take account of the unexpected but that it is the unexpected which so often dominates the overseas scene.

Secondly, there are criticisms of the methods adopted. For instance some claim it is wholly artificial and unrealistic to leave British parliamentary and public attitudes out of account; some that inadequate attention is paid to potential; and some that the methods used disproportionately depress the level of our political interests in less important countries.

Thirdly, it is argued that however much one emphasises the roughness of the yardstick which the table provides, and the fact that it should not be used as a direct guide to effort, in practice, if it is used at all, it will be abused.

To fundamental critics the reply seems to be that with all its limitations this exercise should help us to identify and focus our effort on the more important of our overseas interests and thus to provide a tool for helping to guide redeployment of our limited resources at a time when our rôle is changing. We believe that the method we have used is particularly useful in highlighting the great spread between countries where there are significant interests at the top of the table and those where our interests are small at the bottom. Moreover the exercise stimulates constructive and critical thought and should minimise the extent to which decisions are guided by corporate personal prejudice and historic or ethnic memory.

As to method, we believe the exercise could be greatly improved and developed with the help of our colleagues in Whitehall. This may be particularly true in the field of potential. As to public opinion we feel that if the exercise is to serve its purpose at all, it should not build in to the calculation of interests current expressions of opinion. This factor is erratic and tends to incorporate the *status quo* and to incline towards public opinion being followed rather than guided. Its inclusion would be likely to obscure areas in which the British interest could best be served by changes in policy. We do not of course try to judge the amount of effort which internal political pressures may demand but we would hope that one of the results of the exercise would be that significant variations between the present effort and priorities generally in the list should lead to serious questioning of present policy.

As regards misuse, our experience hitherto has certainly suggested that it is difficult to convince those who might find the exercise useful that it should not be used as a direct guide to effort. But we do not believe that the risk of misuse outweighs the advantages.

160 FCO 49/245, no 55a

18 June 1969

'Priorities': FCO record of a meeting with permanent secretaries¹

Sir D. Greenhill opened the meeting by saying that our purpose was best summarised by paragraph 5 of his letter of 22 May and particularly by the following passage: 'The paper is no more than an attempt to illustrate on a comparative basis the underlying importance to the United Kingdom of the countries of the world—i.e. the underlying British national interest in them. It is a rough visual aid, a starting point when particular priorities have to be decided.' He then suggested that the meeting might consider:—

- (i) General comments on our paper and in particular on the methods and criteria adopted.
- (ii) Is it worth doing further work on this exercise interdepartmentally?
- (iii) If so, what machinery would be suitable?

Sir W. Armstrong said he found the paper impressive and would encourage further work to be done on it. Of course the list of priorities was rough but something like this needed to be done. He had one point about the criteria. He wondered whether

¹ Sir D Greenhill chaired the meeting. It was attended by Sir D Allen (Treasury), Sir A Part (Board of Trade), Sir J Dunnett (MoD), Sir W Nield (Department of Economic Affairs), Sir R Hooper (Cabinet Office), Sir W Armstrong (Civil Service Department), Sir R Clarke (Ministry of Technology), Sir G Wilson (Overseas Development).

there was not some ambiguity in the political/security marking insofar as countries were thought to be likely or able directly to affect the security of the U.K. There were perhaps two variables. First, the strength and size of the particular country and, secondly, the susceptibility of a particular country to our influence. The latter could be volatile. And smaller countries could be more important than bigger ones, cf Spain and China.

Sir D. Allen thought the paper was an excellent idea and was the right way to look at things. He had four points:—

- (i) Giving different weighting to various criteria did not in fact alter the overall results substantially: this interdependence between the variables suggested some stability in the general judgements reflected in the paper and some confidence in the methodology.
- (ii) Some factors, e.g. sterling balances, were changeable.
- (iii) We should try to see whether we could not look ahead. It was more difficult to forecast trends. But they were very important: Japanese growth was a case in point. (Some international bodies such as the I.B.R.D. had made forecasts of growth rates which might be useful.)
- (iv) He understood why the paper had deliberately excluded the domestic political factor. But public and parliamentary attitudes could not be discounted even if they were sometimes irrational.

Sir D. Greenhill accepted the importance of public opinion but suggested that it was useful to have an objective assessment of national interest against which this public opinion could be viewed.

Sir A. Part said that he would like to know more about the purposes to which the paper was to be put. He found some contrast between the approaches of the priorities paper and the Duncan Report although both tended to the same conclusions. If the intention was to help to keep our balance of overseas representation right, the paper might be useful. He agreed that it should be treated as a sensitive document in view of other countries' susceptibilities. In specific fields of activity priorities might be different from the comprehensive priorities in the paper. For instance, export promotion priorities might well be different. And what was the significance in terms of action of China's place high up the list? It was for this sort of reason that he would like to know more about the purposes for which the paper was intended.

Sir W. Nield considered that more work could usefully be done. In particular G.D.P. might be weighted in relation to growth rates. The analysis of priorities was bound to be a bit arbitrary and in particular could not take unexpected changes into account. He wondered about the extent to which the paper could become a major criterion of policy and how much its somewhat mechanistic approach should be balanced by continuing qualitative judgements.

Sir J. Durnett thought the exercise was particularly useful from a mind-clearing point of view and was well worth pursuing further. It might be more helpful to try to lengthen the time-scale to the medium from the shorter term.

Sir G. Wilson agreed generally with what had been said. He welcomed the exercise and said it would be helpful to the O.D.M. He too would like to see the paper weighted for growth potential. He wondered what use would be made of it after it had been refined: its actual use would need a lot of qualification. But however qualified, once it was agreed it would acquire a certain momentum of its own.

Sir R. Clarke welcomed the paper and thought it gave a particularly good view of the balance of our political/economic interests in the European/Atlantic area. This coincided with a recent assessment by the Ministry of Technology on those countries which were most important to Britain in their field. He thought the exercise had thus been shown to have a solid basis. He wondered whether it would not also be useful and illuminating to try to work out how Britain would look in a similar table seen from the point of view of the Americans, Russians, French, etc.

Sir R. Hooper thought the paper important and that it would prove useful. We need not agonize at present too much over future uses and abuses. He had been struck by the extent to which NATO was ahead of the Commonwealth and by the surprisingly low place of the oil-producing countries in the Middle East. He added that the Central Statistical Office would be glad to give any help they could in carrying the exercise forward.

Sir D. Greenhill thought that the consensus of the meeting was that the exercise was worth pursuing with caution but that we should not put too much further effort into it.²

On the purposes to which the paper might be put, *Mr. Everett* [FCO] mentioned that it was already proving useful in connection with the information estimates and also the fact that some consideration had been given in the F.C.O. to whether any conclusions about the trade promotion effort in the Persian Gulf could be drawn from it. On growth, *Mr. Wright* [FCO] said that the aim had been to make the paper as simple as possible and that in fact the results had been shown not to be very sensitive to refinements in method.

Sir A. Part said he was somewhat bothered about the use of the exercise in connection with trade promotion. Although it provided a useful general sketch of our world-wide interests, it might prove dangerous in use even if any directive governing its use were informal and carefully qualified. *Sir D. Allen* thought the usefulness of the paper would be largely in the relationship between general effort and general importance of particular countries. In particular cases other criteria would have to be applied: for instance in relation to sterling balances there was only one criterion, namely the size of the balances. *Sir G. Wilson* mentioned that among the qualifying factors involving O.D.M. effort were those parts of their expenditure which represented a historical hangover (e.g. £5 million per annum to Malta) and also those efforts which were part of a bigger international operation.

As to machinery it was agreed that the F.C.O. would set up a working group chaired by an Under-Secretary. *Sir D. Allen* thought the working group should *inter alia* seek to define the limitations of the use to which an agreed paper could be put and areas of use in which particular discretion might be needed. *Sir J. Durnett* agreed that too much further effort should not be put into the paper but added that he thought it would be necessary to up-date it from time to time.

In answer to a question from *Sir A. Part*, *Sir D. Greenhill* said that he thought the exercise would be of no direct use in connection with the Duncan follow-up. But that in consideration of Duncan's 'outer area' the priorities paper might help to show 'how outer' various posts should be considered to be.

² The exercise was not, however, discontinued. It was updated annually, and FCO departments were instructed about how to grade for priority purposes the countries for which they were responsible. In May 1973 a draft paper was prepared on 'Priorities for British foreign policy'. It considered whether Britain should pursue a broad-based foreign policy, or one that was more selective (FCO 49/418 & 432).

161 FCO 49/260, no 1

16 Dec 1969

'Five principles for British Middle East policy': memorandum by FCO Planning Working Party. Annexes II & III

During the past century British governments have treated the Middle East* as an area of special concern. The main reasons for this have been:—

(a) *Its strategic importance for Britain*

This national interest derived above all from the Indian Empire; it centred upon the Suez Canal and upon Iran.

(b) *Britain's historic part in the creation of Israel*

Since the first world war we have been embroiled as a nation in the Palestine problem.

(c) *Britain's historic involvement with a number of Arab régimes*

This dates from the 19th century in the Gulf and Egypt, since the first world war in Jordan and Iraq and to a lesser degree Saudi Arabia and the second world war in Libya. This involvement was matched by French involvement in Syria, Lebanon and the Maghreb and was strictly national not Western.

(d) *Britain's interest in Middle East oil*

This was originally a national strategic concern.

2. British policy has been closely constrained by these historic interests and involvements and by emotional, moral and political attachment to causes in the area. In the next decade, however, the constraints upon British policy as well as British influence in the Middle East, will be much diminished. Thus:—

(a) The Suez Canal has become of marginal importance (even when it reopens) and the Imperial route is no longer our prime concern. Overflying rights over Turkey and Iran for the 'Cento-route' for the support of our Hong Kong and Fiji commitment will continue to be important but on a more modest scale than Britain's earlier requirements. Although Iran is still strategically important in its own right this is a common Western interest and not a special British responsibility.

(b) Although public concern for Israel is scarcely diminished we no longer have significant leverage with the Arabs or Israelis. The leading international rôle must necessarily be taken by the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. Britain and the countries of Western Europe can choose the part they play with more freedom, but it is the two super powers, with the Arabs and Israelis themselves, who will determine events.

(c) By 1971 the process of Arab revolution and British disengagement will leave no régimes in the Arab world to which we have important commitments. This is not to say that we shall not have important economic and political business to conduct there; but sponsorship of one régime need no longer make us oppose the ambitions of other Arab States. The Arabs will have to sort out their own affairs for good or ill (in the short run, no doubt, the latter) and we can try to construct our relations with each régime on a basis of mutual self-interest without seeking to play a part in Arab family squabbles.

(d) The British national interest in oil production in the Middle East is shared with the United States and to a lesser extent with France. In conditions of potential

* For the purpose of this paper 'The Middle East' includes all the Arab countries plus Israel and Iran but not Turkey or Cyprus.

world oversupply although very valuable it is of lesser importance than the shared Western European interest as consumers of oil in the continuity of supply and the level of prices. This is controlled for the most part by economic forces and is a far cry from the original concept of a nationally owned source of strategic fuel for the Navy.

3. These changes mean a shift in emphasis from an all-pervading national involvement in a strategically vital area to a general Western interest in an area which, though important, will run its own course and where Western European and British influence will be economic and diplomatic but not military. It suggests a policy to be followed by H.M.G. based upon the following five principles:—

(a) *Disengagement whenever possible from the Arab/Israel dispute.*

Although there will be a continuing responsibility to play a part as members of the Security Council Britain's past involvement is a drawback. A solution will not be found unless the U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. are prepared and able to put extreme pressure upon both sides. We can make only a limited contribution to this process. A satisfactory settlement is in any event highly improbable and if in seeking such a settlement we are seen to favour realistic Arab compromise we set at risk major British and Western European interests elsewhere in the area. The U.S.A. cannot stand back; H.M.G. can and should.

(b) *Disengagement from inter-Arab affairs*

By 1971 we shall be free of treaty obligations in the Arab world. Although it would be to our advantage if stable traditional régimes were to continue in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and (in some form) in the lower Gulf the prognosis is not good. The Arab revolution in all its forms is a powerful force and there is little outsiders can or should do to check it. We should regard it like measles; unpleasant, occasionally dangerous, but perhaps inevitable. If we fight against it the likelihood of failure is great and the probability of a reaction against our interests enormously enhanced. We do not need to appear in the next decade as the enemies of the Arab people.

(c) *Judicious support for Iran*

It is a strategic asset to the West that Iran is not a Soviet puppet state and Britain continues to need overflying rights. It is an economic asset that Iran's oil policy is directed principally by national considerations and not effectively in concert with Arab oil supplies. We should continue our efforts to maintain Iran in its present political posture and economic development but should recognise certain limiting factors: (a) the main Western contribution must come from the U.S.; (b) support for Iran should not be taken to the point of involvement in Iranian/ Arab disputes; (c) the situation in Iran is brittle and in the end the Shah will have to work out his own salvation. Western support will not compensate for lack of judgement or luck on his part. In the longer term we may have to settle for less close relations than we now enjoy. Strategically this could mean greater Iranian neutrality between East and West; economically we might see increasing Arab/ Iranian coordination of pressure on the oil companies for the improvement of terms. Our first interest is in the stability rather than the pro-Western military alignment of Iran.

(d) *Cautious management of Britain's assets in the Middle East*

The Arab/Israel dispute, the Arab revolutionary movement and the Arab unreadiness to face reality mean that little good and less stability can be anticipated. We have very little material interest at stake in the Arab Levant; we

should not increase it. We have major irreplaceable interests in the outlying Arab oil-producing areas; they will be used to blackmail us, and they will be insecure. The Arab oil producers are major holders of sterling; they may use this as a weapon against us. We must protect our assets in the Arab world as best we may by identification with Europe.

(e) *Association with Western Europe in policies toward the Middle East*

Our remaining major interests in the area are of importance to the West as a whole. Even our oil companies' operations, though they bring additional profits to this country, serve the common interest of the West in reliable cheap energy supplies. This interest has been at risk over the past two decades principally because of Arab hostility arising from the Arab/Israel dispute. Britain alone or acting in concert with the U.S. will continue to be vulnerable on this score. In association with Western Europe (even with France) there is and will continue to be less risk that we may endanger our European interests and relations.

4. Supporting arguments for these principles are contained in the attached Annexes.¹

Annex II to 161: Britain and the Arab régimes

British policy in the Arab world has been historically tied by close relationships with a number of Arab régimes, falling short, but not far short, of a colonial relationship. These relationships meant that by 1925 Britain had clients of one degree or another throughout the Gulf, in Iraq, Transjordan, Egypt and the Sudan. We had a mandate in Palestine, a close relationship with Saudi Arabia and a colony and protectorate in Aden. A client relationship with Libya was developed only during the Second World War. The French had comparable relationships with Syria, Lebanon and the Maghreb countries.

2. Following the Second World War these countries acquired a greater measure of independence and from 1952 onward their traditional régimes, with which the West had been associated, have been exposed to a series of revolutions. Now only in the Gulf does Britain retain (until 1971) a vestige of the old guardian relationship. Only in Morocco, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and the Gulf States has there been continuity in the régime.

3. As long as Britain's relationship with and responsibility for the traditional régimes was intact, one of our major concerns in the area was their survival against aggressive and revolutionary nationalism, often directed from Cairo. This concern, whether expressed in military terms or not, together with the presence of British armed forces stationed in the area led Arab nationalists to see Britain as for monarchy and against progress in the Arab world just as it was thought to be for Israel and against the Arabs. A rationale and plausibility for British support of the monarchies came from the fact that traditional régimes had survived best in the oil rich states in which we had a major economic stake. With the exception of Iraq it was our friends who were the 'Haves' while the revolutionaries were the 'Have-nots'.

4. There is now significantly less reason and far less need for us to run the risks involved in partisanship in inter-Arab squabbles.

¹ Only annexes II & III are reproduced here

(a) The balance between the Arab traditional and revolutionary régimes has changed and we now have major interests in both camps. Libya is already revolutionary; whether Saudi Arabia or Kuwait 'go under' will be determined by their own efforts and not (as in 1961) by British intervention.

(b) The handling of oil affairs or even of the Arab/Israel dispute is not divided on clear-cut lines between traditional and revolutionary régimes. In significant respects Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are just as recalcitrant and politically dangerous as are the revolutionaries. Oil affairs, our major concern, are in any case, with the important exception of reactions to developments in the context of the Arab/Israel dispute, increasingly the subject of technical negotiation. We cannot keep any Arab source of oil 'safe' by defending a local ruler. After 1971 we shall no longer provide a factor in the stability of the lower Gulf.

(c) With the departure of British troops from Aden and the imminent departure of those now in Bahrain, Sharjah and Libya there will only remain Israel as a focus of hostility against Britain among the Arab revolutionary régimes.

5. This affords Britain an important opportunity. On the one hand the termination of our commitment to a group of Arab states and the departure of our local forces will reduce our ability to influence or control future developments. In the short term in the Gulf the result may be expensive chaos. On the other hand we shall continue to have important economic, business and perhaps even some worthwhile political interests to protect in the area. We shall be in a far better position to achieve this end if we do not have the need to prevent or play a part in fights within the Arab family of countries to dog our policies.

6. This implies that we shall have to learn to live as best we may with the revolutionary régimes and stand aside from the havoc they may cause. This will not be easy since we have major interests at stake. The problem of the revolutionaries, governments, *feda'yeen*² and wild young men alike is their lack of realism. Obsessed with the world's conspiracy against them and eager to revenge each imagined slight they admit no practical compromise. So long as the traditional régimes remain in power this paranoid lack of realism is partially concealed but the policies of the traditional régimes are hurried along by the need to escape a confrontation with the revolutionary spirits. It is likely that there will be new Libyas in the Arabian peninsula and it is with the young revolutionaries that we shall have increasingly to deal.

7. We should argue that in dealing with them we should take advantage of our disengagement from earlier relations with the traditional régimes:—

(a) to disclaim any wish to play a part in determining the future the Arab world chooses for itself;

(b) to minimize our prominence in the Arab/Israel dispute;

(c) to emphasize our wish to have a fruitful economic and technical relationship between Britain and the Arab world, whatever its political complexion.

8. We should not pin too much hope on the prospects. The major economic links between the Middle East and Western Europe and especially the U.K. will remain. The young Arab régimes are, however, likely to prove extremely unreliable and

² Arabic, literally 'one who sacrifices himself'. A resistance or freedom fighter in Arab eyes, a terrorist to Israelis.

dangerous to do business with for at least a decade. If we were to seek to prevent their gaining influence in the Arab Middle East we should be lost; our opportunity consists in being free to try to live with these highly unsatisfactory people.

Annex III to 161: Iran

Historically Iran has been a cockpit for rivalry between Russia and Britain with the British rôle taken over in part since the Second World War by the U.S.A. The considerable British and Western interests in Iran which endure are:—

- (a) a Western interest in the containment of Soviet expansion;
- (b) a British interest in the 'CENTO route' for overflying;
- (c) a Western European and Japanese interest in the continuity of Iranian oil supplies, which offer, as in 1967, a credible reserve supply against Arab dangers;
- (d) an economic interest, primarily Anglo-American, in the continued profitable operations of the oil consortium;
- (e) an interest related to (c) and (d) in the absence of conditions of Irano/Arab hostility which would prevent oil operations on the Arab shore of the Gulf.

2. Western policy since the Second World War has been to seek to keep Iran within the Western camp through the U.S./Iranian bilateral agreement, through CENTO and through massive U.S. military assistance, while encouraging the Shah in his efforts to develop Iran socially and economically. The present position is that Iran has achieved a notable measure of social and economic progress; this has not, however, rendered the Shah's régime acceptable either to the Left-Wing radical students or to the reactionary religious leaders. Iran has also maintained a pro-Western alignment; but recently Irano/Soviet relations have greatly improved. There are two key questions affecting the future of the country and Western interests there:—

- (a) can the Shah carry off the process of moving from a wholly pro-Western posture to one of greater neutrality between East and West without putting an unbearable strain on the structure of his régime;
- (b) can internal social and economic development proceed quickly enough to gain for the Shah the wider support he needs to ensure the continuity of his régime.

3. As regards (a), the nationalisation by Dr. Mossadeq³ of the Anglo/Iranian Oil Company highlighted the dangers of any move by Iran away from a pro-Western stance and Britain and the United States have viewed with grave suspicion the growing *rapprochement* between Iran and the Soviet Union over recent years. This trend in Iran's policy towards a less-committed posture may, however, be inevitable:—

- (a) the West cannot back the Shah to the hilt, e.g. favouring Iran at the cost of the Arabs by increasing Iranian oil production to finance his development plans. If pursued in any thoroughgoing fashion such a policy would endanger the interests of our oil companies in the Arab world;

³ Prime minister of Iran in 1951 when the Iranian parliament sanctioned nationalisation of oil industry. Dismissed by the Shah in 1953 as a result of unrest fomented by US and UK intelligence with the express purpose of removing the prime minister from office.

- (b) it is in the interests of stability as well as the continuity of oil supplies that relations between Iran and the Arabs should be improved to some degree rather than that they should be at daggers drawn. We could not help to achieve this end by heightening the competition between them;
- (c) while in principle the U.S. Government would no doubt wish Iran to retain a more pro-Western posture, they are poorly placed to control Iran's policy on this point. They have proved unable to prejudice Iran against economic association with the Soviet Union or against acceptance of Soviet military equipment in the recent past. Nor are they likely in the present balance of their foreign policy to seek a more forward rôle for themselves in deeper commitment to the Shah;
- (d) our impending withdrawal from the Gulf will confirm the Shah's inclination to reinsure with his Northern neighbour;
- (e) our CENTO link with Iran is a frail one. We cannot do much to strengthen it and, while we wish to sustain the Organisation so long as we can, we must recognise its limitations and the likelihood of its demise.

4. We must therefore expect the Shah to move closer towards economic cooperation with the Soviet Union, to seek further markets for Iranian oil in Eastern Europe and generally, to ease Iran into a more neutralist position between East and West. It could be argued that the longer term, once the transition to a neutralist position has been successfully achieved, this could be of benefit to the Shah in strengthening his internal position. Certainly there is little that Britain or the West can do to obstruct this trend, and efforts to do so may only be to our disadvantage. The period of transition, however, will be fraught with risks both for Iran and for Western interests there.

4. The outlook for Iran is uncertain. Forecasts must include the possibility of an upheaval on the death of the Shah and the eventual emergence of a Left-Wing 'young officers' régime. Another possibility to be envisaged is Iranian/Arab hostilities in the Gulf. British and Western power to guard against these contingencies is, however, limited. We cannot, however, afford to be too involved with him since this would incur Arab hostility. We must recognise that he and his régime are vulnerable and that total Western commitment to it would carry proportionate risks in the event of its overthrow, while having only a marginal effect on its chances of success. In the case of the U.K. these cautions are reinforced by our forthcoming withdrawal from the Gulf. In the political field therefore, while maintaining our support for the Shah, we should recognise the limitations upon it and also that the present trend towards more neutral policies is probably inevitable. In the end stability in Iran is more important to us than Iran's present degree of pro-Western alignment. We must therefore be prepared to maintain tactful support for the Shah even though his external policies are not always to our liking.

5. In the economic field, we should recognise that British and Western interests are great and the prospects for our continued enjoyment of these interests is probably better than in the Arab world. A neutralist Iran should not be inconsistent with this continued enjoyment. Moreover, assistance here would both serve the immediate object of supporting the Shah's régime and provide useful links with any successor régime. The degree of assistance which Britain can give Iran is limited, but it is for consideration that we should contribute more of our aid and technical assistance and effort in that country, as compared with the rest of the Middle East.

Development Division in Beirut serves Iran, but we should perhaps think in terms of an establishment comparable with the Beirut Division based in Teheran, rather than in the Arab world.

6. Iran's strategic position and oil will make her of continuing importance to the West whatever the régime there. In the field of oil supplies Iran will offer some protection against the dangers in the Arab world. She will also offer a slightly more stable field for investment than does the Arab Middle East. We shall therefore continue to be more involved in Iran than elsewhere in the area; disengagement is not a practical policy here. But Iran offers us no real alternative to, or refuge from, the problems presented us by the Arab Middle East. She will also have her own instabilities in future and will decide her own course. For planning purposes we should assume that we shall have to deal with a less pre-Western régime than has hitherto existed. Our first interest will be in the stability rather than the pro-Western military alignment of the country.

CHAPTER 8

Whitehall reorganisation and the Overseas Civil Service

Document numbers 162–191

162 CO 866/173, no 1

24 Mar 1965

‘Transfer of Colonial Office functions to Ministry of Overseas Development’: circular note by the Establishment and Organisation Department of the Colonial Office on new arrangements for financial and economic aid to colonial territories

The division of responsibility between the Colonial Office and the Ministry of Overseas Development (O.D.M.) in relation to financial and economic aid to Colonial territories has now been agreed. The Minister of Overseas Development is responsible for development aid to Colonial territories. The Colonial Secretary remains responsible for their financial and economic policies, and therefore for the content and approval of the development programme towards which aid will be given. He is also responsible for all non-development aid, including budgetary assistance, emergency assistance and (subject to paragraph 10 below) reconstruction programmes arising from natural disasters, and all other forms of financial assistance to Colonial Governments, (e.g. military and security assistance) except development aid and technical assistance.

2. These arrangements clearly require the closest co-operation and consultation between the two Departments, which will be jointly concerned in promoting development in the Colonies. The O.D.M. will naturally have a close interest in the content of development programmes, while the Colonial Office will wish to satisfy themselves that specific projects take due account of the needs of the territory and the effect on its economy and its budgetary position. The following principles have therefore been laid down and should be observed with immediate effect.

3. *Development Plans.* In exercising their responsibility for these, the Colonial Office will consult with the O.D.M. and make full use of the latter’s economic planning unit and technical advisers. Responsibility for initiating and co-ordinating consideration of Plans will, as previously, rest with Colonial Office Geographical Departments, who will refer the Plans in the first place to the Colonial Office Finance Department and Economic Advisers. As soon as sufficient are available, two copies of the Plans will be sent to Finance Department for transmission to the O.D.M. for their comments. Colonial Governments are being asked to provide sufficient copies for this purpose.

4. *Aid allocations and approvals.* The O.D.M. are responsible for making allocations of U.K. development aid and for approving, with Treasury concurrence as necessary, C.D. and W. schemes and Exchequer loans. They will act in these matters

in agreement with the Colonial Office. The procedure to be followed in dealing with individual applications from Colonial Governments is set out in paragraph 12 below.

5. *Approval of Exchequer loans.* Such loans cannot in terms of the C.D. & W. Act (Section 2(3)) be approved unless the Secretary of State is satisfied that provision has been made to secure that the recipient Government will apply the loan to the purposes for which it is approved, and that the servicing of the loan has been duly secured. The O.D.M. will accordingly consult the Colonial Office before making a loan and will also consult the Colonial Office before fixing the loan terms, because of their implications for the financial position of the territory. These questions will be the concern of the Colonial Office Finance Department.

6. *Market Loans and Local Loans.* These do not represent aid by H.M.G., whose concern with them relates to their place in the financial and economic policies of Colonial Governments, in the context both of development planning and of budgetary effects. The Colonial Office will therefore deal with all questions concerning such borrowing; but Finance Department, who should always be consulted, will keep the O.D.M. currently informed, since the extent to which loans may be available from such sources is relevant to considerations of Exchequer loans and indeed of other aid.

7. *External aid from non-U.K. sources.* The question of Vote responsibility does not arise in relation to aid to Colonial territories by other Governments or international organisations. Both the Colonial Office and O.D.M. are obviously concerned, and they will always act in close consultation and agreement on these questions. If a particular case is judged to be solely a question of development aid, it may be appropriate for the O.D.M. to take the lead in its consideration, but in cases where political or other special questions predominate, it may be appropriate for the Colonial Office to take the lead. Each case must therefore be treated *ad hoc*. Geographical Departments should consult Finance Department in the first instance.

8. *Commonwealth Development Corporation.* The O.D.M. will be responsible for relations with the C.D.C. including approval of C.D.C. projects, but will consult the Colonial Office (or C. R. O.) in view of the effect of C.D.C. projects on the economy of the territories.

9. *Budgetary Aid* for individual Colonial territories will be settled between the Colonial Office and Treasury in the same way as it has been hitherto. But the Colonial Office (Finance Department) will consult with the O.D.M. to ensure that budgetary aid takes account of the implications of development aid for the territory's recurrent budget, just as the O.D.M. will consult with the Colonial Office on this point before approving development aid (see paragraph 12).

10. *Aid following natural disasters.* The responsibility for immediate emergency aid and for programmes of reconstruction and rehabilitation will remain with the Colonial Office. But since there is frequently a development element in such programmes, assistance towards which will fall on Votes or loan sources controlled by the O.D.M., the Colonial Office will consult with the O.D.M. in the formulation of such programmes.

11. *Vote responsibility.* The O.D.M. will be responsible, and will account, for the following forms of aid:—

The Development and Welfare Vote (grants and loans under Section 1 of the C.D. and W. Act)

Exchequer Loans

C.D.C. finance.

12. *Procedure for dealing with development aid applications.* It will be open to either the Colonial Office or the O.D.M. to initiate schemes or proposals for aid. But most schemes and proposals will no doubt continue to originate in Colonial territories, in the context of Development Plans. Colonial Governments are being instructed to send scheme applications to the Colonial Office, with two copies for immediate communication to the O.D.M. These applications will be considered initially in the Colonial Office Geographical Department. In order to assist the O.D.M. in examining the applications quickly, the Colonial Office Geographical Department will automatically arrange for two copies of each application, as soon as it is received in the Colonial Office, to be sent to the O.D.M. Geographical Department concerned (who will be responsible for obtaining the views of others concerned in the O.D.M., including the Advisers). The Colonial Office Geographical Department will refer the papers with their comments to the Colonial Office Finance Department, who will transmit the Colonial Office views on the application to the O.D.M. Geographical Department. The O.D.M. will not give effect to development schemes, or other projects affecting development, wherever initiated and however financed, without the agreement of the Colonial Office; this is because of the Secretary of State's responsibility for financial and economic policy in Colonial territories.

13. It will be the responsibility of the O.D.M. after development aid applications have been agreed with the Colonial Office, to process them with the Treasury, and to approve grants or loans. Officers of the Colonial Office Finance Department will take part in discussions with the Treasury as may be necessary.

14. *Channels of communication.*

(a) The normal channel of communication between the Colonial Office and O.D.M. on all matters covered by this notice will be between the Colonial Office Finance Department and O.D.M. Geographical Department, except for the automatic transmission to the O.D.M. of copies of development aid applications as stated in paragraph 12.

(b) Correspondence on such matters with Colonial Governments will continue to be addressed to, or to originate from, the Secretary of State. In the case of matters on which the D.T.C. corresponded direct with Colonial Governments before the establishment of the O.D.M., there will also be no change in the existing channels of communication.

163 DO 193/85

3 Jan–8 Feb 1966

'Future of the CRO': minutes by Sir S Garner, Sir P Gore-Booth, Lord Beswick, Mr Cledwyn Hughes and Mr Bottomley

I think I should draw attention to the debate in the House of Lords on 21 December on Lord Gladwyn's¹ motion advocating a single Ministry of External Affairs.

2. It is interesting that, whereas the same debate last year aroused considerable

¹ Formerly Sir G Jebb (1st Baron Gladwyn cr 1960); Foreign Service from 1924, ambassador in Paris, 1954–1960 (retired). For the debate in the House of Lords, see *H of L Debs*, vol 271, 21 Dec 1965, cols 1012–1035.

interest and nearly all spoke in strong opposition to Lord Gladwyn, on this occasion there were only five other speakers (apart from the Govt.) and all supported Lord Gladwyn—but then all (except Lord Selkirk) were former career members of the Foreign Service. It is also a pity that some of the speakers thought it necessary to indulge in criticism of the Commonwealth or of the C.R.O. (Lord Gladwyn's catalogue of Commonwealth conflicts—columns 1014–15—and his comments that it is clearly a help that 'the P.M. does most of the real work in all these Commonwealth crises' and that 'the conception of the Commonwealth as an inter-racial club would be strengthened, and not weakened, if the C.R.O. were abolished altogether'; Lord Inchyra's² reference to such Commonwealth Govts. 'as still attach any importance to their relations with this country'; Lord Hankey's reference to sorting out 'the futile and absurd difficulties which occur' in Africa and other parts of the Commonwealth.)

3. My own view on all this is quite clear. I believe that merger of the two departments should follow the merger of the staffs in one single Diplomatic Service³ and will do so. I do not think the moment has yet come for this for the following reasons:—

(1) We have made far better progress with the Diplomatic Service than most of us expected and we are already merging some of the work. This has been a major operation which will greatly assist the eventual merger of the two departments, and it would be a formidable administrative problem to have another upheaval before the Service is even a year old.

(2) In any case we have to plan for the merger of the C.O. with the C.R.O. and it is asking a lot to take the two tasks simultaneously.

(3) With great respect to various of their Lordships, surely now when there are so many Commonwealth problems the abolition of the C.R.O. *would* give rise to public misunderstanding and criticism.

(4) In any case there are valid purposes which the C.R.O. serves (and I have always assumed that, if there were to be a single Ministry of External Affairs, there would need to be a second Minister with full Cabinet rank who would be responsible for Commonwealth Relations).

As Lord Gladwyn has threatened to make this an annual occasion, if former members of the Foreign Service are going to speak in a bloc perhaps we should try to see that some of the other arguments (put previously by Lord Attlee, Lord Amory and others) are also mentioned.

S.G.
3.1.66

I am grateful to Sir Saville Garner for sending me a copy of his interesting minute of 3 January about the debate in the House of Lords on Lord Gladwyn's motion advocating a single Ministry of External Affairs. I do not propose to venture any comment of substance.

² Lord Inchyra (1st Baron cr 1961), formerly Sir F Hoyer Millar, permanent under-secretary of state, FO, 1957–1961.

³ HM Diplomatic Service was established on 1 Jan 1965 by merging the Foreign, Commonwealth and Trade Commissioner Services. It staffed diplomatic and consular services overseas, in Commonwealth as well as foreign countries, and the FO and CRO in London which continued as separate departments with their own secretaries of state. Garner was the first head of the Diplomatic Service.

2. However, since the final paragraph gives an unintentional impression of conspiracy somewhere, I attach some importance to all recipients of Sir Saville Garner's minute knowing that there was no contact between Lord Gladwyn or any of his supporters from the former Foreign Service and myself prior to the debate. (I had one enquiry from a member of the House of Lords who was *not* a member of the former Foreign Service, asking me whether a particular point of view would 'embarrass the Foreign Office'; I told him that we would not be embarrassed by anything.) In other words, it should be clearly understood that there is no desire or attempt by this Office in any way to influence what its former members may say on this subject on such occasions.⁴

P.H.G-B.

5.1.66

Secretary of state

I read this minute from the P.U.S. with great interest.

2. On the narrow question of what is said in the House of Lords, I absolutely agree with the P.U.S. that something more ought to be done to see that a better image of the Department is projected into any future debate which Lord Gladwyn or others might initiate on this topic. I think it would be useful if you send a short note to Frank Longford embodying the facts which the P.U.S. sets out in para. 2 and the points which he makes in para. 3(3) and (4) and underlining the suggestion made in the final paragraph.

3. I also think that something rather more basic emerges in the facts set out in para. 2 of the P.U.S.'s minute. It is becoming increasingly fashionable, especially among some snobbish and pseudo intellectual people, to decry the value of the Commonwealth and the C.R.O. Accepting as I do the 'valid purposes' to which the P.U.S. refers in his para. 3(4), I am sure it would be well worthwhile, when the current crisis⁵ dies down, if not before, to try and find time for a grass roots discussion about the future of the Commonwealth and a new and better relationship which we ought to establish between its members. If we could get this sorted out then the 'valid purposes' of C.R.O. could be stated more convincingly. Incidentally, some time ago the Colonial Office organised a weekend in Oxford⁶ at which some outside people were invited to come in and have a discussion about the problems of winding up the Colonial Empire and providing for the residual territories. That was generally thought to have been an imaginative idea and a great success. Could something of the same sort be considered for discussing the problems to which the P.U.S. refers in his paper?

B.

5.1.66

Secretary of state

P.U.S.

The debate initiated by Lord Gladwyn, which is to become an annual affair if he has his way, was interesting, if a little one-sided. I do not think Sir Saville Garner intended to convey more than the latter point in his minute, and he was right to

⁴ Lord Beswick noted (6 Jan) at the end of Gore-Booth's minute: 'Would a pot of tea together not help?!'

⁵ Over Rhodesia.

⁶ See 285, note 6.

make it. It is not surprising that ex-Foreign Office officials should take this line, especially if, as in the case of Lord Gladwyn, they are more preoccupied with the possibility of Britain's entry into the Common Market than in the struggle to preserve the Commonwealth during a period of unusual strain.

2. In his winding up speech Lord Walston very properly referred to the high degree of co-operation which has developed between the Foreign Office and the C.R.O., both on the official and ministerial levels. This is attributable to the integration of the Diplomatic Service, the involvement of both Departments in a succession of crises, and the willingness of their respective personnel to work together effectively. This is clearly the right road and the right pace as of now. To accelerate at this delicate stage would be damaging to morale and injurious to the successful conduct of our policies. In their anxiety to make their point, Their Lordships overlooked the very real progress which has been made. Their faintly critical treatment of the C.R.O. should not worry us unduly, but it is irritating when one considers the devotion and outstanding ability displayed by officials throughout a prolonged period of stress.

C.H.
18.1.66

Minister of State

Lord Beswick

P.U.S.

I have read the preceding minutes with interest and agree that we must try to get a less one-sided presentation of our case next time the Lords debate this subject.

On the general question of the future of the C.R.O., I entirely agree with the points made in paragraph 3 of Sir Saville Garner's minute of 3rd January. I accept that the existence of two Offices dealing with foreign affairs sometimes leads to duplication and administrative inefficiency, but the creation of Joint Departments as necessary would seem to be the answer to this (these Departments seem to have worked very well). However, even though the creation of Joint Departments sets us on the road to a single Office eventually, I think there will still be a need for two Offices for some considerable time to come:—

(i) As long as it is a major British interest to preserve, despite all the difficulties, a special Commonwealth relationship with various countries, it will be important to have a special Office to foster that relationship. Conversely, as long as Commonwealth countries wish to preserve a special relationship with us, we should provide in London the means for them to do this. Once the special Office is abolished, then the special relationship begins to fall away; at any rate, the impression is given that we do not attach great importance to it.

(ii) Following on from this, as the P.U.S. says, the recent crises in the Commonwealth have put the special relationship under particular strain. More rather than less work and concentration on fostering the relationship is required in the future until it is restored.

(iii) The present generation of African leaders show themselves particularly susceptible to personal diplomacy. The policies of their countries are influenced by personal messages from and discussions with the Prime Minister or, since he cannot do this the whole time, with a Minister of senior Cabinet rank who is close

to the Prime Minister; a Minister of State at the Foreign Office just would not do, particularly since most of the Africans concerned are Heads of State. This also seems to be a situation we shall have to live with for some time.

(iv) Further to this, this type of personal contact requires constant Ministerial visits to Commonwealth countries. Clearly, the Foreign Secretary would not be able to take this on and, again, a more junior Minister would give offence and would defeat the objects of the exercise. Similarly, as we know to our cost, Commonwealth Ministers, however junior, visiting London are offended if they do not get an interview with the senior Minister concerned here.

(v) With the setting up of the Commonwealth Secretariat, we shall probably get a considerable increase in Commonwealth meetings (e.g. the Sanctions Committee) and other activities which require the presence of a senior Minister.

All the above points and others in the same vein have been made before, but I thought them worth re-stating. Most of them might be answered by having a Minister of Cabinet rank in the Foreign Office. But this solution has never worked well in the past (e.g., Mr. Eden's appointment as Minister for League of Nations Affairs in the 1930s); someone has to be the senior Minister in charge of the Office and he is the one whom the Minister of Works from The Gambia wishes to see when he visits London.

A. G. B.
3.2.66

I agree with all the Secretary of State says but still think the thoughts buried in para. 3 of my minute worth reflecting upon. I emphasise this after noting (e.g. in butter quota discussions) the hostility of Treasury Ministers to the conception of planned Commonwealth trading.

B.
8.2.66

⁷ Anthony Eden (Lord Avon), foreign secretary, 1935–1938, 1940–1945; prime minister, 1955–1957.

164 CO 866/148, no 23

18 Jan 1966

[Greenwood leaves the CO]: establishment announcement no 7 from Sir H Poynton to all CO members of staff circulating a farewell letter from Mr Greenwood

[Although Greenwood wanted to speed up the rate of decolonisation he believed it would still take 'some years to complete'. During the transitional period and for some time after he assumed, not only that experienced staff would be needed to carry out the decolonisation programme but also that new recruits—principals and assistant principals—would be appointed within the CO. For what were described as 'psychological reasons', he also wished to change the name of the CO to 'Office of Territories Overseas' (CO 866/143, no 379, CO note, 'Future of the Colonial Office', 17 Aug 1965). From the ODM to which he had been appointed in Dec 1965, Greenwood sent a message to Poynton to the effect that his farewell message reproduced below 'is addressed to you personally and to thank you for the wise advice that you gave me during my time at Church House' (CO 866/148, letter to Poynton, 7 Jan 1966). Of all the officials concerned, Poynton felt more keenly than most about the impending demise of the CO. Responding in June 1964 to the text of a message Greenwood proposed to put out about how the CO might merge

with the CRO, Poynton commented: 'In the first sentence I would like to omit the words "the remaining Departments of" which suggest that the Colonial Office is already reduced to skin and bones. In the second sentence I do not like the phrase "to emphasise that Britain has entered the closing phase of the Colonial era". For one thing I don't think it is true. The statement will follow from a passage which makes it clear that we still have 26 dependent territories some of which may want to continue indefinitely to be dependent. In the second place the phrase seems to me to have the flavour of the anti-Colonial "guilt complex". We can take pride in our past achievements and the fact that we have been able to bring a great number of territories to independence. I do not think it is a matter of pride to say that we are getting rid of places merely for the sake of getting rid of them as if there were more joy in heaven over the Imperialist that repents of his imperialism than over 99 just anti-Colonialists. Could we perhaps say something more like "in recognition of the fact that Britain has completed its major responsibilities as a Colonial Power"? In general I want to avoid the impression that the Colonial Office is a piece of carrion which had better be buried as quickly as possible . . .' (CO 866/146, no 7, minute, 19 June 1964.)]

1. I am circulating to all members of the staff the following text of a letter which I have received from Mr. Greenwood.

'Now that I have handed my Seals of Office to Her Majesty, I should like you and all my friends in the Colonial Office to know with what sadness I leave you all but with what eagerness I look forward to work in the Ministry of Overseas Development which complements that upon which we have been engaged together in Church House. I should like you all to know how much I have appreciated your help and friendship.

Nineteen sixty-five has been a year in which much progress has been made. We have worked on the principle that all our territories shall have their independence which want it and are capable of sustaining it and our projected Enabling Bill will facilitate constitutional change. The Gambia has gone into independence. Firm commitments for independence have been given to Mauritius, British Guiana, Basutoland, and Bechuanaland, and all of them, when the time comes, will leave us in warm-hearted friendship. Six of the Leeward and Windward Islands have been offered a new post-Colonial status of Associated States, which I believe others will wish to emulate and will, I hope, open a new chapter in our relationship with Her Majesty's territories overseas.

Fiji has moved nearer to full responsible government. Bermuda has concluded her own constitutional survey and has made proposals which will bring her constitution into line with modern needs. The Bahamas are making a success of their new constitution.

Members of Parliament have visited the smaller and more remote of our dependent territories. Helped by their reports, and by the valuable report of Lord Taylor on the Channel Islands, we have started working out a status for these Island Realms, whose foreseeable future lies in close association with the United Kingdom—a status which will give them a form of government they are able to sustain and which will have no trace of colonial stigma.

As I write, the constitutional future of Barbados is undetermined, but certainly this ancient dependency will make constitutional progress in 1966. We have put to our friends in the South Pacific Commission proposals for making its work more effective, for giving greater responsibility to the dependent territories, and for increasing interdependence between the metropolitan Powers.

The only aspect of our work together about which I feel regret is our failure so far to solve the South Arabian problem. I had hoped, with your help, to have brought into being a new sovereign Arab State on the shores of the Gulf of Aden. But it is not for any lack of effort or absence of goodwill on our part that we have failed, and I believe that, with the help of our High Commissioner, we have prepared plans which can be applied successfully when the political situation allows.

For the whole Office, and for our posts overseas, as well as for myself, this has been hard but enthralling and rewarding work. There is so much in our Colonial history for which as a nation we can rightly claim credit. I believe that not least we can be proud of the dedication of the men and women who work in the Colonial Office, and who represent us and carry on Her Majesty's Government in the dependent territories in the three oceans and on every continent.

I shall always feel privileged to have worked with those who show so deep a sense of responsibility for the well-being of the peoples who are entrusted to their care, so genuine a concern for their well-being after independence, so much wisdom, and so much warmth of heart.

Secretaries of State come and go. Perhaps I am the last but one with sole responsibility for the Colonies. But for centuries to come the work and achievements of the Colonial Office and the Colonial Service will influence for good the history of the human race.'

2. I have written to Mr. Greenwood saying how deeply grateful I am for his message and for the very nice things that he says about the Office and the Colonial Service.

165 CO 866/165, no 22

25 Feb 1966

[Responsibility in Whitehall for Hong Kong]: letter from A N Galsworthy to G P Hampshire¹

I am very sorry indeed that I have not sent an earlier reply to your letter about the possibility that responsibility for Hong Kong should be transferred to the Foreign Office when merger of the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Colonial Office takes place. But our strong opposition to this proposal—for that is our reaction—was explained orally by Henry Hall to John Ford² recently, and I have also mentioned the matter briefly to Colin Crowe.

2. The argument on which the suggestion in your letter rests is that the external relations of Hong Kong are closely bound up with H.M.G.'s relations with China and the United States; that the Foreign Office must therefore be closely consulted on many aspects of Hong Kong's affairs; and that it would be a natural development of the present arrangements for consultation if on merger the staff who had up to that

¹ Deputy chief of administration, Diplomatic Service Administration Office.

² H P Hall, Colonial Office, 1965–1966, assistant under-secretary of state, Commonwealth Office, 1966–1968; J A Ford, head of Establishment and Organisation Dept, Diplomatic Service; Sir C Crowe (see 151, note 1), chief of administration, HM Diplomatic Service, 1965–1968.

point been dealing with Hong Kong in the Colonial Office were brought together with the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office.

3. With respect, we do not think that this is a valid argument in itself. There are a fair number of our remaining dependent territories in whose affairs external relations loom large, involving close and continuous contact and consultation between the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office. I need only mention British Honduras or the Falklands—and of course Gibraltar. By the same token it could be argued that on merger responsibility for these territories should be transferred to the Foreign Office.

4. But the fact is that in all these cases, as well as in the case of Hong Kong, there are strong arguments against any arrangement which would make the Foreign Office their 'parent' Department in Whitehall. Since the suggestion has been raised in the case of Hong Kong only, I need perhaps rehearse the arguments only in respect of Hong Kong.

5. What differentiates the case of South Arabia from that of Hong Kong is, first, that South Arabia is due to achieve independence by 1968, and second, that the Government of the Federation of South Arabia has specifically asked that responsibility for its affairs should be transferred to the Foreign Office. They did this because the concept of the Commonwealth has no appeal or attraction for them; their concern is to 'arrive' with the Arab League countries; and they want as soon as possible to be seen to get on to the same footing as the Gulf States, pending their attainment of independence. When therefore we told the Ministers of the South Arabian Federation the other day that on merger the Foreign Office would assume responsibility for relations with them, we were in fact acceding to a request which they had already passed on to us no less than three times.

6. The position with regard to Hong Kong is entirely different.

7. In the first place, there can be no question of Hong Kong becoming independent; this is well recognised and accepted locally, and there is no pressure for anything remotely approaching independence; and all thinking opinion in Hong Kong, bar the Communists, do attach importance (there are hard commercial reasons for this) to the retention of the Commonwealth connection. Further, our position in Hong Kong rests on the maintenance of local confidence that the territory will remain in British hands. However unrealistic may be the view that Hong Kong has an indefinite future as part of the Commonwealth (having regard to the expiry of the lease of the New Territories in 1997 and the known Chinese attitude towards the Colony), we must always take the greatest care to avoid giving any indication that official thinking contemplates the surrender of the Colony to China as an eventual and unavoidable outcome. There can be no doubt that if we were to single out Hong Kong, together with South Arabia, from among the remaining dependent territories and transfer responsibility for it to the Foreign Office, public opinion in the Colony would promptly deduce that in official eyes the Colony has no future in the Commonwealth and that its interests might be subordinated to those of our relations with China and the U.S.A. The effect could be catastrophic. Political difficulties, as the great majority of the Chinese population sought to reinsure with the Chinese Communist regime, would be accompanied by economic disintegration as external capital was withdrawn and the flow of new capital dried up; and the Colony would be ripe for a take-over from within engineered by the C.P.G. We envisage that some such situation may well arise as we

get much nearer to 1997. But, given China's present attitude, we feel there is no need for us to abdicate our position now. There is also the point that any apparent change in the U.K. relationship with Hong Kong might encourage the Chinese Government to assert a claim for the return of Hong Kong to China, e.g. as in the case of Spain and Gibraltar.

8. These are admittedly the most dramatic arguments why we (and I must add Mrs. White, our Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, who visited Hong Kong in January) are quite convinced that Hong Kong must remain the responsibility of the merged Office. But apart from these political reasons there are straightforward administrative arguments as well. By reason of its circumstances it is clear that Hong Kong can never get very far beyond the straightforward pattern of Crown Colony Government. This being so there is a great deal of straightforward administrative work in relation to Hong Kong which we are called upon to perform. What we have termed the Dependent Territories Division of the merged Commonwealth Office in the merger plan which we have sent to you will remain equipped to discharge this kind of function, in a way which the Foreign Office would not I think ever set out to be. From this point of view we feel that transfer to the Foreign Office would be the wrong organisational solution.

9. I need perhaps hardly add that nothing in which I have said above is in any way intended to underrate the importance and weight of Hong Kong's external relations in the responsibilities we now carry. But I do not think there is any reason to suppose that the present arrangements are in any sense unsatisfactory from this point of view. There is the closest contact and cooperation between the Colonial Office and Foreign Office in regard to the external problems of Hong Kong. And in order to meet the variety and complexity of Hong Kong's problems in this field we have over the years devised the arrangement whereby a Foreign Service officer is seconded to the service of the Hong Kong Government as Political Adviser; an assistant has recently been added. We have also recently introduced a Foreign Service Officer into the department here. These arrangements have worked well and we are quite sure that they remain for the future the right way of handling the affairs of this territory in the merged Commonwealth Office.

10. I am sending a copy of this letter to Arthur de la Mare in the Foreign Office.

166 CO 866/169, no 4

19 Apr 1966

[Responsibility in Whitehall for Aden]: minute by Mr Lee to Mr Wilson

In accordance with your request the Foreign Secretary and I have considered which Department should have responsibility for South Arabia, in the light of your decision to defer the merger of the Colonial Office and Commonwealth Relations Office until later in the year.

2. We both think that, despite this postponement, the responsibility for South Arabia should now be transferred from the Colonial Office to the Foreign Office.

3. You had previously agreed, in your minute of 11th February, that this should be done when the Colonial Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office merge. We

have however already reached a stage in South Arabia when our business there involves increasingly questions of foreign policy rather than direct administration. Our main objects now are to secure an orderly withdrawal of our forces and to leave behind us a reasonably stable country which will as far as possible be well-disposed to us and will be accepted by Arab and other international opinion as an independent member of the Arab world. This is primarily a matter of guiding and helping them in their relations with other Arab countries, a matter in which the Colonial Office cannot move without the day-to-day help of the Foreign Office. And much South Arabian business has also now to be judged in terms of the consequences for our relations with the Gulf States, which is again a Foreign Office responsibility.

4. This is also a particularly convenient moment to make the change; as there has been a pause in developments while the Federals digest the decision about the Base, and we are on the edge of a new phase while they formulate and adjust their relations with Cairo and Jeddah. With this in mind the Federal Ministers are anxious for the transfer to take place as quickly as possible, in the belief that it will place them on the same basis as the Gulf States and enhance their standing and prestige in the Arab world. To make the change now will please them and earn us a measure of goodwill which will lighten our task between now and the time when we withdraw.

5. Finally, to effect the change now may help to convince those in South Arabia who still doubt the sincerity of our intentions that we really do mean to grant independence by 1968, and that they cannot therefore look to a continuing British presence to pull rabbits out of the hat.

6. There would be no administrative difficulty about the transfer. There will obviously remain many matters in which the experience of the Aden Department of the Colonial Office will still be needed. To provide this, and to ensure continuity, the intention is that the Colonial Office Aden Department should be transferred to the Foreign Office where it would work as one with the Foreign Office Arabian Department. Plans for this have been made and can be quickly and easily implemented.

7. If you accept our view, we suggest that the transfer should take place as quickly as possible. We assume that you would wish it to be announced from 10, Downing Street. In that case we would suggest that our departments concert with your staff the terms and timing of the announcement.

8. I am sending copies of this minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretaries, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and to Sir Burke Trend and to Sir Colin Crowe.¹

¹ Responsibility for Aden was transferred from the CO to the FO in May 1966.

167 CO 866/164, no 50 24 May 1966
 ‘Merger of Commonwealth Relations Office and Colonial Office’:
 outward guidance tel 153 from FO and CRO to certain missions

The Prime Minister announced in the House of Commons on 10 May that integration of some of the work of the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Colonial Office would start shortly and that staff of the two offices would be merged into a new Commonwealth Office on 1 August 1966. Although the Prime Minister added that it would be necessary for some time after 1 August to retain two Secretaries of State to deal respectively with relations with the independent Commonwealth and with the

affairs of our dependent territories, it is the ultimate intention that the merged Commonwealth Office will be headed by a single Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs.

Background

2. The background to the Government's decision to merge the C.R.O. and the Colonial Office on 1 August is, of course, the reduction of the work of the Colonial Office resulting from the grant of independence to many of the former British colonial territories.

The Commonwealth Office

3. The name 'Commonwealth Office' for the combined Office, which will be used from 1 August, is intended to suggest the combination of two great Departments of State.¹ We have no desire to conceal our remaining colonial responsibilities, nor of course does the end of a separate Colonial Office imply any loss of desire on our part to promote constitutional development in the remaining dependent territories to the fullest possible extent. You should, if necessary, make the point that in terms of administration, it is only commonsense for us to combine in one office responsibility for relations with both fully independent Commonwealth countries and dependent territories. There is nothing 'neo-colonialist' about what we are doing.

4. In practice the merger of the C.R.O. and Colonial Office will involve the setting up of a Dependent Territories Division (and later an Associated Territories Department, when six Leeward and Windward Islands in the Eastern Caribbean acquire the status of associated territories) in the combined Commonwealth Office. This part of the Office will comprise the remaining geographical departments in the Colonial Office, together with some functional work (e.g. Dependent Territories Constitutions Department), where this is specially related to the dependent territories.

5. The work of the other functional departments of the Colonial Office, dealing e.g. with economic, establishments and information work, will be distributed among existing CRO departments. Two new departments will be set up, an Aviation and Telecommunications Department (combining the work of the Colonial Office Communications Department and the connected work of the C.R.O. General and Migration Department) and an Aid Department (combining the work of the Colonial Office Finance Department and the development policy work of the C.R.O. Development Policy and West and East Africa Economic Department). The DSAO will be responsible for the administration of the combined Commonwealth Office.

6. The Aden Department of the Colonial Office was combined with the Arabian Department of the Foreign Office at the beginning of May when responsibility for South Arabia was transferred.

7. The process of merging the functional aspects of the Colonial Office with the C.R.O. will begin shortly and is due to be completed before the actual vesting date for merger on 1 August.

¹ Outlining the changes in a note (25 May 1966) to A R Thomas at the ODM, H P Hall of the CO emphasised that the merger was not a takeover by the CRO; technically the CRO would also cease to exist as a separate office on 1 August (CO 866/164, no 46A).

168 CO 1058/11, no 15

10 Jan 1967

'The future of HMOCS': Commonwealth Office memorandum for the Working Party on the Staffing of the Smaller Colonial Territories

At the fourth meeting of the Working Party Commonwealth Office representatives spoke of the case for a home-based service to serve the remaining dependent territories. Further consideration has been given to the problem in the Commonwealth Office and the result is set out in this paper.

2. Decolonisation has been so rapid in recent years that it is natural to assume that the small and scattered territories which remain will soon follow the larger ones into independence, or one of the new 'post-colonial' statuses that are now being evolved. It is natural too to suppose that, with decolonisation, any British concern with staffing problems in the territories will come to an end. Unfortunately, neither assumption is justified.

3. As the Review of Future Policy in the Smaller Colonial Territories (already circulated to the Working Party) shows, the indications are that after the Caribbean Associated States have come into existence early in 1967, only three more of the territories for which the Commonwealth Office is responsible (Mauritius, British Honduras and Swaziland) will be decolonised before 1970. Sixteen territories¹ will then be left. We think it may be possible to decolonise eight of them² between 1970 and 1976 but there can be no certainty about this. To do so successfully we shall in several cases (especially in the Pacific) need more staff than we have at present. The prospect of the remaining eight territories³ is one of indefinite dependence.

4. Of these sixteen territories, ten receive regular and substantial aid and are likely to do so for at least another five years in every case and, in many, indefinitely. Constitutional changes will not affect their financial position. But unless they are adequately staffed, the aid they receive will be largely wasted and the need for aid further prolonged.

5. Although political decolonisation does not end a territory's need for qualified British staff, 'localisation' can do so. Table A* shows the number of expatriates now serving territory by territory (a total of 3246) and the number of posts which local governments expect to fill with local officers by 1971. It will be seen that localisation is not likely to do more during this period than offset the additional posts which will have to be created. The final column of the table suggests that after 1971 local officers will in some territories begin to replace expatriates, though not at all rapidly. It would be reasonable therefore to assume for planning purposes that we shall need to maintain the present strength of the service till 1971, and run it down gradually over the succeeding ten years. Even this would not apply to Hong Kong, (see paragraph 8) nor to the smallest territories, where localisation is no answer because

¹ excluding the British Indian Ocean Territories and the British Antarctic Territory where no staff in the ordinary sense are required: and Tonga which is to all intents independent.

² Montserrat, Seychelles, British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, Fiji, Gilbert & Ellice and British Solomon Islands.

³ Bahamas, Turks & Caicos Islands, St. Helena and dependencies, New Hebrides, Pitcairn, Gibraltar, Falklands and Hong Kong.

* Tables not printed

the population is too small to produce even one doctor, or engineer, or veterinarian etc. in each generation.

6. Small and relatively unimportant as the remaining territories are, they receive a disproportionate share of international attention. If we permit the administrations there to deteriorate for lack of staff of the right calibre, and development programmes to lag, our critics at the U.N. will make our failures widely known. This is a risk H.M.G. cannot afford to take.

7. Thus H.M.G. will need to maintain expatriate staff in the dependent territories at the present level for a further five years, and to arrange a gradual and orderly run-down thereafter, if the process of decolonisation is to be completed without disgraceful failures.

Structure of the service

8. Table B shows that more than half the expatriates and three-quarters of the members of H.M.O.C.S. in the sixteen territories are serving in Hong Kong. Large enough, therefore, to sustain a satisfactory age and promotion structure on its own, the Hong Kong service, unlike that of any other territory, is still predominantly a permanent and pensionable one. There is however one point at which this orthodox structure is beginning to buckle. The retiring age is 55, and it is generally accepted that our rule in Hong Kong will come to an end, with the lease of the New Territories, in 1997. This means that no-one born after 1942 will reach the retiring age before we leave. Transfers into and out of Hong Kong are very rare.

9. In the other fifteen territories there are—disregarding the Bermuda police who should be considered separately—some 1200 expatriate civil servants, about 350 of whom are pensionable while just over 600 are serving on contract. The remainder are either on secondment or on loan mainly from Britain⁴ or New Zealand. Of this 1200, more than 800 are serving in the Pacific, including almost all the pensionable officers.

10. A high proportion of contract officers are re-employed pensioners from territories that have become independent. Their average age is therefore high, and the turnover is rapid.

11. Table C shows that 40% of the pensionable officers in the Pacific are 45 years old or more, and therefore eligible to retire under the '45 rule', while another 28% will reach that age before 1971. Permanent and pensionable recruitment in these territories stopped in 1962.

The future

12. The danger is therefore that in five years' time we may be left with only 32%, or say 100, of these pensionable officers, with a few long service contract officers, to leaven a total staff of 1400 to 1500. The remainder would be serving on contract or secondment and have less than five years experience. These inexperienced people would have to deal with territories that will be more populous, developing faster and politically more active than at present.

⁴ 34 are on secondment from Britain. Secondment—which the Rogers Working Party expected to become a major source of staff—has been disappointing in practice. Secondments have been difficult to arrange, the performance of some of the officers concerned has been disappointing and there has been much heartburning because F.S.A. gives then a considerable financial advantage over H.M.O.C.S. officers.

13. On the other hand, if all goes well, the special measures to be taken as the result of the Working Party's interim report should slow the rate of retirement of pensionable officers from the Pacific. Moreover there is an exodus of expatriate officers at present from Northern Nigeria, another may come shortly from Zambia, and even that may not be the bottom of the barrel. It will be possible to recruit some 'retreads' from these sources though it should be borne in mind that these people belong, generally speaking, to the same age group as those already serving.

14. These expedients may perhaps carry us through to 1971; even so they might only postpone the crisis. By 1976 we could be in serious difficulties. It is quite possible that Fiji will then still be a British responsibility and almost certain that relatively large numbers of British staff will still be required in the other Pacific territories. These—if our present expectations turn out to be a little optimistic—may well be the crucial years of decolonisation in the Pacific. Unless we have meanwhile rebuilt a cadre of experienced officers to replace those who are now 35 and over (and will be then be 45 and over) we shall be at a very serious disadvantage. There should still be a reservoir of experience in Hong Kong which could be drawn on to some extent in emergency, though only for short periods. But it is always dangerous to plan to improvise. Moreover as things stand, those who serve in Hong Kong have no opportunity to acquire experience elsewhere and their value would therefore be limited.

A new career structure

15. Retirement ages for pensionable officers are fixed in the pension laws of the territories, usually at 55 or 60. In several territories there is also a provision, made after the 1939–45 war at the instance of the Colonial Office, for retirement at 45 under certain conditions. In practice this provision is only invoked with the agreement of the officer concerned. In the late fifties, when it became clear that the Service's expectation of life had been drastically reduced, no attempt was made to modify these provisions, but, instead, there was a rapid changeover to contract recruitment. In 1962, as already noted, the recruitment of pensionable officers was abandoned, except in Hong Kong.

16. The armed forces, which have admittedly not felt the same danger of early extinction but have nonetheless faced sharply reduced career expectations and grave uncertainties about the future, have dealt with the problem more flexibly. They have maintained a nucleus of regular officers, with alternative retiring ages at 37 and 55; but they have also recruited 'limited service regular officers', who serve for a basic period of 16 years, and short service officers who serve from three to eight. It is possible to transfer from a short to a longer engagement.

17. The two cases are by no means identical but some at least of the principles underlying this military arrangement are relevant. They enable the employer to adjust his staff to changing circumstances, and allow the employee a series of opportunities to reassess his prospects and, if he wishes, withdraw with the gratuity or pension he has earned. If these principles were applied to the terms of service for expatriate staff in the dependencies the result might be something on the following lines:—

- (i) All entrants would serve a first contract (perhaps 3 years plus leave) renewable by mutual agreement.

(ii) Before the officer completed his first contract the employer would decide whether:—

- (a) To offer him a further contract on similar terms or
- (b) to offer him a long term contract—say for two further tours—or
- (c) to dispense with his services.

(iii) Before the officer completed a longer contract, the employer would decide whether to offer him further employment on pensionable terms for a minimum further period, say 10 years.

Obviously, an officer who converted from a short to a long contract would not receive his gratuity till he completed the latter; and an officer who converted to pensionable terms would not take terminal benefits till he eventually retired.

18. It should be remembered that in the ordinary course an officer would be in his middle 30's when, if at all, he was given the opportunity to convert to pensionable terms. He would probably be married and have young children and we should in effect be inviting him to forego his last opportunity of securing satisfactory permanent employment elsewhere. The shorter, therefore, the period of further employment he could be offered, the better the terms that would be required to persuade him to accept. Indeed it would be necessary to work out new salary scales appropriate to this radically different career structure.

19. It would obviously be desirable to introduce such terms uniformly throughout the service and give officers already serving an opportunity of converting to them. Suitable contract officers could be given the option of becoming pensionable on completing 10 years' service; contrarywise the few pensionable officers with less than 10 years' service would gain an option of resigning with a gratuity at the same age; while those with over 10 years' service would be regarded as having opted for a second 10 years.⁵ There would be no need to make any change in the case of those with 20 years' service. In selecting contract officers for the option of pensionable service it should be possible to restore a reasonable symmetry to the age structure, thus ensuring a steady supply of senior officers for the future and a reasonable promotion prospect.

The case for reconstructing H.M.O.C.S. as a British Government Service

20. The British Government is responsible for the recruitment and initial training of H.M.O.C.S., and for organising inter-territorial transfers. In the heyday of the Colonial Empire their remaining responsibilities were devolved upon colonial governments; the Colonial Office limited itself to a largely formal supervision of promotions within the territories and the Secretary of State provided an ultimate court of appeal if an officer did not accept the local government's decision on a staff matter.

21. Paradoxically enough the home government has in recent years found itself obliged to intervene increasingly in service matters. It now subsidises the salaries of the great majority of expatriate civil servants outside Hong Kong under the OSAS scheme. This, coupled with the fact that so many of the remaining territories are Treasury controlled, means that salaries and terms of service are already to a great

⁵ This is of course the same figure as that in paragraph 17(iii). For present purposes (i.e. retaining experienced officers) we need a high figure. The period might be reduced to 5 years later on as the odds shorten.

extent matters for metropolitan decision. As territorial governments fall under local control the Secretary of State's responsibility for the personnel recruited in his name has to be increasingly invoked. Nowadays it is seldom practicable for local governments to finance compensation schemes; so, despite our efforts to conceal the fact, they are usually paid for by the British tax-payer. The change to contract recruitment and short engagements means that recruitment is a far heavier task than previously. It would be illuminating to compare the numbers of staff now needed in Whitehall to administer the reduced service with the numbers required in say 1956. In general the principle of devolution of responsibility for expatriate officers upon territorial governments no longer corresponds with reality.

22. The disadvantages of maintaining this fiction are:—

- (i) the complex arrangements made necessary by the division of financial responsibility;
- (ii) the division of the service into territorial enclaves between which transfers are difficult and any large-scale redeployment impossible;
- (iii) the resentment felt by local officers at the better conditions of service enjoyed by expatriates who are fellow employees of the same government, and the consequent difficulty of bringing expatriate salaries up to world market rates. This is a serious problem in territories as different in other respects as Hong Kong and the Seychelles.

23. The strongest argument in favour of the change is that it would bring an essential instrument of H.M.G.'s overseas policies under their direct control. The maintenance of effective administration in a number of the remaining territories is a positive British interest: Hong Kong and Gibraltar are obvious examples, but the same is true of St. Helena, because of Ascension, and the Seychelles because of the B.I.O.T. In most of the others—the Bahamas and the smaller Caribbean territories, where there are sizeable American installations, and the Pacific territories—an administrative collapse would be a serious embarrassment to our allies. Rather than permit it we should be obliged to reinforce the local governments by secondments from the Diplomatic Service or the Home Civil Service, both of which are already overstretched.

24. Expatriate staff associations, and colonial governors and establishment officers, have consistently advocated a 'home-based Service'. It is natural that morale should be low after the rapid contraction of the service in recent years. Nothing would restore it so effectively as open acknowledgement by the British Government of its direct responsibility for their organization and welfare.

25. The objections summarized in paragraph 8 of WPSCT 66/9 were directed at the assumption of responsibility by H.M.G. for the service *as it is at present organized*. They would to a great extent be met if the proposals in paragraphs 15 to 21 above were adopted. There would for instance be no question of absorbing redundant officers into other H.M.G. services, unless it were desirable to do so on other grounds, or of continuing payment to people for whom jobs could not be found; nor would localization be delayed.

26. The question of the arrangements for financial adjustments between H.M.G. and the territorial governments, though important, is not a decisive one. How far, if at all, the cost of the new service to H.M.G. would exceed the cost of meeting in some other way existing and anticipated liabilities would depend upon the efficiency of its

administration. Properly managed, the service should pay for itself by economies in other directions—more effective use of aid, improved administration and transferring redundant officers to other territories rather than paying them compensation. Criticism, from local officers and others, is inevitable; but it is likely to be far more severe if the problem is not tackled, or if we try to solve it with half measures.

Application of the new arrangements in individual territories

27. Hong Kong has so much the biggest stake in the future of the service that its inclusion or exclusion will affect the whole scale and character of any reform of the service. It is obviously desirable in principle that there should be uniform conditions of service throughout the dependent territories. For Hong Kong itself there would be several advantages: expatriate officers serving there would welcome coming under H.M.G.'s control as regards terms and conditions of service, and the option of retiring before the age of 45 with accrued benefits, for which the Association of European Civil Servants has been asking in view of the uncertainties of the Colony's future. Moreover it would relieve the local unofficial members of Councils of responsibility for decisions about expatriate staff, and would facilitate localization by providing some flexibility in the numbers of expatriate staff. On the other hand, the unofficials might suppose that the scheme would entail additional expenditure, (as it might well do), and might actively regret the loss of their present influence over both the terms and conditions of service and the composition of their expatriate staff. Few serving officers would opt for the new terms if they included lower basic salaries and a liability to be posted to other territories (where gross emoluments must be less and the future is generally less secure).

28. Our guess is that the Hong Kong Government would turn the scheme down, and that if they accepted it most serving officers would opt against it. However both would probably resent being excluded without consultation; it would therefore be necessary, when the proposals were published, to offer the Hong Kong Government the option of participating in the new scheme or retaining its existing arrangements.

29. As a matter of form it might be necessary to give all territorial governments the same option. Some prosperous and constitutionally advanced territories, such as the Bahamas, might prefer existing arrangements. The option would be less real in territories that depend on U.K. financial aid and where the Governor has effective control of public service matters. In such territories H.M.G. might reasonably decide that it was in the interests of the territory and the service alike to introduce the new scheme. The options described in paragraph 19 above would not of course be available to officers in territories where the Government rejected the proposals.

The case for merger with the Diplomatic Service or home departments

30. It has been suggested that, rather than establish a new home-based service, British officers in the dependent territories should be absorbed into the Home Civil Service and the Diplomatic Service. There are two main categories of officers to be considered.

- (i) *Administrative Officers.* It has been suggested that the Diplomatic Service, which has absorbed the department responsible for the dependent territories, should also absorb the Administrative Service of H.M.O.C.S. and in future staff administrative posts in the territories. This would probably be welcome to serving

Administrative Officers, even though not all of them were absorbed into Branch 'A', provided that they were guaranteed a full career. Such a guarantee would be a gamble from H.M.G.'s point of view.

So far as new entrants are concerned however there is a great difference between colonial administration and the normal work of the Diplomatic Service, and it is likely that officers with experience of administering dependent territories would be posted from one dependent territory to another, rather than to representative posts in foreign or Commonwealth countries: similarly officers with purely diplomatic experience would not be chosen for senior administrative posts in the dependent territories. Thus no real integration seems possible. The two services would remain separate in all but name.

(ii) *Professional and technical officers.* Serving officers in these categories could hardly be incorporated in the Diplomatic Service, but could, it has been suggested, be attached to appropriate Home Departments, education officers in the territories with the Ministry of Education, and so on. But many of the people concerned are, for instance, teachers or doctors, rather than educational or medical officers, for whom there is no equivalent in the appropriate Ministries: they would have to be merged with—and their successors found from—staff employed by local authorities, and this scarcely seems practicable. Moreover it would be very difficult to hold together an administration in which every professional officer owed his allegiance to a separate U.K. Ministry to which he could appeal when, as must sometimes happen, a decision went against professional advice.

31. Experience has shown, and views recently expressed by Colonial Governors emphasize, the importance of a central organization in London to deal with colonial staffing problems, and where colonial needs are studied and understood. The O.D.M. provides such an organization. Its task would be impossible if it had to concert all postings with the D.S.A.O. or Establishment Officers in Whitehall. On the other hand there will be a continuing and in all probability a growing need for members of the Home Civil Service to serve on secondment in colonial territories in posts which cannot be filled by direct recruitment.

32. Much would depend on whether or not Hong Kong was included in any scheme of this kind. It would probably not be possible for the Diplomatic Service or the Home Departments to accommodate the large numbers of British officers in corresponding Hong Kong Departments as well as the smaller numbers in other territories (see Table D). In general merger between H.M.O.C.S. and existing British Government services must be regarded as an alternative to the arrangements proposed in paragraphs 17 to 29 above. The case for merger becomes stronger the smaller the numbers involved.

Summary

33. (a) We shall need to maintain expatriate staff in the remaining territories (excluding Mauritius, British Honduras and Swaziland) at the present level until 1971, after which a gradual run down should be possible (paragraphs 1–7).

(b) The present distribution and age structure of the service is illustrated in the tables. By 1971 there will be not much more than 100 experienced officers under 45 outside Hong Kong. By 1976 we could be in serious difficulties (paragraphs 8–14).

- (c) A limited number of new officers should be recruited on short contracts, with an option to convert later, if required, first to extended contracts and then to limited pensionable engagements.
- (d) Suitable serving officers—whether on pensionable or contract terms—should be given the opportunity of converting to the new terms so that a small cadre of experienced officers with a rational age structure is rebuilt.
- (e) H.M.G. should assume direct responsibility for the reconstructed service.
- (f) It would be open to territorial governments (e.g. Hong Kong) to opt out of the new arrangements, but H.M.G. would expect most governments to accept them.
- (g) A possible alternative would be to merge H.M.O.C.S. with the Diplomatic and Home Civil Services.

169 FCO 77/31, no 1

8 & 9 Feb 1967

‘The future of the Commonwealth Office and Foreign Office’:

FO minutes¹ by M E Allen² and Sir C Crowe

I am most grateful for the opportunity to look at these papers. My own immediate thoughts are as follows.

2. It is quite plain that almost everyone in the two Offices feels that a merger will come about sooner or later, and that people are working towards this almost all the time. We know also that the Foreign Secretary thinks that a merger is bound to come about sooner or later. I should therefore doubt whether, when it does happen, the merger will be quite such a traumatic experience as some people fear. Just as the creation of the single Diplomatic Service has proved much easier than was expected, so the creation of one combined Department in London is likely also to be much simpler than we expect.

3. I see the argument about the load on the single Secretary of State, but to be frank I have never been deeply convinced by it. After all, every other country in the world so far as I know manages to conduct its external relations with one man in charge, and there seems to me to be no overwhelming reason why Britain should be the odd man out. I recognise that the British Minister for External Affairs would have Parliamentary duties which, for instance, the American Secretary of State does not have; but I suppose that the American Secretary of State has external responsibilities even greater than those of the British Foreign Secretary and Commonwealth Secretary combined. All in all I am inclined to think that the case for Britain being, and remaining, the one man out of step is not proved.

4. The timing of any merger would have to be considered in relation to a number of things, not only the next election. The progress of any application we might make to join the European Economic Community would obviously be important in this respect. Indeed, whatever the fate of our application, it seems likely to point towards delay. If our application succeeds, the abolition of the Commonwealth Office might be interpreted as yet another slap in the face for the Commonwealth and therefore as something to be avoided for a time. If our application fails we would presumably not

¹ These minutes are comments on a draft paper about the future of the Commonwealth Office and FO by Sir S Garner, see 170.

² Deputy chief of administration, DSAO.

wish to do anything that would look as though we wanted to weaken the Commonwealth connexion, again for a time.

M.A.
8.2.67

Sir S. Garner

Thank you very much for letting me see your paper. My first comments are that I doubt if the mechanics of an immediate merger would be quite so difficult as you imply. Everybody assumes a merger will come and people are working towards this end all the time; our reshuffle of accommodation, for example, has this ultimate aim very much in mind. (We would save a good deal of top hamper—which is not a thing I would like to see, however, at this stage of our promotion block.) But for the reasons you give I agree immediate merger would probably be premature.

2. The load on the Secretary of State after a merger is something we shall have to face anyway. There is no real reason why one man should not be able to do it—Mr. Rusk and Mr. Gromyko³ have perhaps greater burdens and M. Couve de Murville⁴ seems to manage. But of course they do not have the demands on their time made by Parliament and politics which are bound to affect any British SoS. What I fear is that, in order to cope, the SoS would tend to become isolated from the Department by the immensity and number of problems. This will require very careful organisation; he will have to concentrate his efforts and leave much to other Ministers.

3. I do not think the halfway house would work for the reasons you give. The Permanent Under-Secretary would, I fear, die either of overwork or lack of it.

4. So I agree that we shall probably have to stay as we are but working towards the goal whenever the time seems propitious. I wonder if 3/4 years might be too long? I would also rather favour a target before the next Election for reasons which I can explain. There is also, of course, the Common Market question to be considered. If we get in we may not want to abolish the Commonwealth Office lest it be taken as a slap at the Commonwealth; and if we fail we may not want to appear to be weakening the Commonwealth connexion.

C.T.C.
9.2.67

³ Soviet foreign minister.

⁴ French foreign minister.

170 FCO 77/31, no 4

25 Apr 1967

‘The future of the Commonwealth Office and Foreign Office’: paper by Sir S Garner¹

The origins of the Foreign Office are no doubt lost in the mists of history, but Ambassadors were a recognised feature of the scene in medieval days and there has

¹ Submitting this paper to Thomson, Garner explained that the views expressed were his own and he had not consulted anyone before producing a first draft. He had since shown it to Gore-Booth and Crowe and taken some of their views (see 169) into account. He had also discussed the matter in general terms with Sir L Helsby (joint permanent secretary, Treasury, and head of the Home Civil Service), Sir B Trend, and his CRO deputies. The paper was not intended to commit anyone, not even Garner himself since he said he was open to persuasion: ‘I have tried to be impartial—and, as far as I can, to wear my Diplomatic Service rather than my Commonwealth hat’ (FCO 77/31, minute 25 Apr 1967).

been a distinct Department of State responsible for relations with foreign countries ever since the beginnings of modern government.

2. The Colonial Office has a less antique story, but a Board of Plantations emerged in the 17th century. Though later there was some confusion between the functions of civil and military administration when Colonial affairs became the responsibility of the Secretary of State for War, there was a distinct Colonial Office for over a century.

3. For the last century at least there were therefore two distinct Departments—the Foreign Office, concerned with diplomacy and relations with foreign countries, and the Colonial Office, concerned with the administration of dependent territories—with clearly defined and different functions. There was of course also the separate India Office since 1858.

4. During the course of this century, however, a hybrid appeared—in the shape of those oversea territories peopled by British stock which enjoyed full internal autonomy. These territories were neither foreign nor subject to direct British administration. The process of their development was a prolonged one and there was no clear moment of time when they made the grade of becoming fully independent sovereign States. (There are still such vestigial signs of imperialism as appeals to the Privy Council and, even today, the Canadian Constitution, in certain respects,² can be amended only by legislation at Westminster.) Nevertheless effective independence had been achieved by the early twenties and led to the creation in 1925 of the Dominions Office as a separate Department of State formed from the old ‘Dominions Department’ of the Colonial Office.

5. It is fair to comment that the Dominions Office in its early days showed, perhaps inevitably, some jealousy of the Foreign Office. Besides being new and with no tradition, it was a minute Department and was, perhaps for this reason, on the defensive, since its aim of developing a sense of Commonwealth partnership was often misconstrued in the rest of Whitehall and it was regarded as being merely the mouthpiece of the Dominions. Moreover its contacts until 1946 were closest with the Colonial Office, since the two Departments worked in the same building and enjoyed a common establishment. It is remarkable that, though it became the normal practice for members of the Foreign Service to be seconded at First or Second Secretary level to High Commission posts, with only two exceptions (Sir I. Le Rougetal³ in South Africa and Sir P. Gore-Booth in India) no former Ambassador in the Foreign Service was appointed to be High Commissioner in a Commonwealth country before the establishment of the Diplomatic Service—though the quality of High Commissioners generally was not high and some candidates from the Home Civil Service were appointed without any very noticeable qualifications for representational work.

6. After the war the Foreign Office, under the leadership of the then Foreign Secretary (Mr. Bevin), made determined efforts to bring the two Departments closer together and to ensure that the Foreign Secretary had a greater degree of control over external policy as a whole. These efforts were strongly resisted by the

² The British North America Act of 1867 was an Act of the British Parliament. After 1949 the federal parliament at Ottawa could amend the Act as it wished except for those areas of jurisdiction affecting the provinces. The constitution was ‘patriated’ to Canada in 1982.

³ Sir John Rougetal, Diplomatic Service from 1920, ambassador to Persia and Belgium before becoming high commissioner in South Africa, 1951–1955 (retired).

Commonwealth Relations Office at the time; they enjoyed the support of the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Norman Brook, and to some extent the sympathy of the Prime Minister (the then Mr. Attlee, who had himself been Dominions Secretary). The issue of principle was allowed to drop, but it was agreed that the two Departments should work together in the closest co-operation and a number of practical measures to ensure this were put into effect. Since that time it is fair to say that, while there have from time to time been personal differences at Ministerial level, the day-to-day collaboration between officers in the two Departments has been extremely close and effective. There are, of course, genuine differences of interest between our relations with a foreign country and our relations with a Commonwealth country and this naturally leads to different points of view between the Departments. But such differences also occur within Departments and have to be reconciled.

7. With the developments in the Commonwealth and the increase in membership, the position of the Commonwealth Relations Office changed substantially over the years. Their responsibilities increased, many of the international crises fell within the responsibility of the Commonwealth Secretary, and the change is reflected in the fact that before the war there were only three posts in capitals abroad—now there are 27. This rapid expansion placed a severe strain on the Commonwealth Relations Office during the 50s and involved recruitment of special staff (to a large extent from retired members of the Colonial Service). But the Commonwealth Relations Office emerged from this recognised as a more significant Department of State containing staff of experience. During the same period, of course, the responsibilities (and numbers) of the Colonial Office declined. The Commonwealth Relations Office felt, therefore, more equipped to deal with the Foreign Office on equal terms.

8. There was another reason for a change in attitude. In the days of the Dominions Office, when they were dealing solely with the old Dominions, it could justifiably be claimed that these were 'sui generis', that Britain's relations with these countries were in fact significantly different from those with foreign countries and required special Commonwealth techniques not applicable in the case of foreign countries. But with the growth in Commonwealth membership, it was difficult to maintain that there was something inherently different between our relations with, say, Ceylon and Burma, or Ghana and Senegal, or Pakistan and Iran. And all Commonwealth countries, old and new alike, were themselves playing much bigger individual roles in international affairs than had the old Dominions. Further, the problems of the world could not be divided into a departmental category. All the major ones affected both Departments. The Foreign Office and Commonwealth Relations Office were alike concerned in such matters as the Defence Review, the aid programme, export promotion, etc. They have an equal interest in such major issues as confrontation, Cyprus, the problems of Africa—and any dispute affecting a Commonwealth country is likely to have United Nations aspects.

9. All this meant that the work in the two Departments was getting more alike and that the job of representation overseas was becoming similar, whether in a foreign or Commonwealth country. It seemed an unnecessary handicap to build up two separate Services in the external field, one of which had little or no knowledge of foreign countries, the other of Commonwealth countries, when clearly a knowledge of both was essential background for either Service.

10. When, therefore, in 1962 the Foreign Office had it in mind to ask for a

committee to review the conditions of service of the Foreign Service, the then P.U.S. at the C.R.O., with the support of the then Commonwealth Secretary (Mr. Sandys)⁴ took the initiative in asking that the review should be extended to include the Commonwealth Service. This was agreed and was included in the terms of reference of the Plowden Committee.⁵ The Committee were, however, instructed not to include the Colonial Office in their review.

11. The Committee set out the relevant considerations at length and concluded that 'the logic of events points towards the amalgamation of the C.R.O. and the F.O. . . . this must in our view be the ultimate aim. However, to take such a fundamental step now could be misinterpreted as implying a loss of interest in the Commonwealth partnership'. They therefore recommended that separate Foreign and Commonwealth Relations Offices should be retained, but should draw their staff from a newly created combined Service.

12. This recommendation was accepted by the Government and the new Diplomatic Service came into being on 1 January, 1965.

13. The experience of all of us has, I think, been that the new Service has operated more smoothly than any of us would have dared to hope; we have pressed ahead with the integration of branches in the two Departments wherever appropriate, we have organised a number of cross-postings (and have still more in prospect), and relations between the two Departments have grown very much closer. This process has been immensely assisted by the newly created single administrative machine, the D.S.A.O. which serves both Departments equally while being part of neither. Indeed the unified Service has come about, not only in name but in fact. Members of the Service realise the implications of their liability to be sent either to a foreign or to a Commonwealth post, and a sense of loyalty to the Service as a whole, rather than to an individual Department, is developing naturally. There have, of course, been inevitable teething troubles which have led to some complaints and a larger organisation inevitably tends to become more impersonal with all the attendant disadvantages for staff morale, but, by and large, the change has worked well and, so far as I am aware, any fears on the part of the C.R.O. that the move was a disguised 'takeover bid' by the 'Big Brother' in the Foreign Office have not been realised. Possibly the position has been eased by the double accident that the P.U.S. at the C.R.O. became Head of the Diplomatic Service within three months of its inauguration and that the P.U.S. at the F.O. had previously been High Commissioner in India.

14. It is relevant to note here that the Colonial Office was merged with the Commonwealth Relations Office on 1 August, 1966 when the new Commonwealth Office came into existence, and that the separate post of Colonial Secretary was abolished in January, 1967, when the Commonwealth Secretary assumed responsibility for the dependent territories. The comment may perhaps be ventured that the double merger in so short a time threw a considerable strain on the administrative machine; ideally it would have been preferable if we could have recovered breath after the one move before taking on the other.

⁴ Mr Duncan Sandys, secretary of state for Commonwealth relations, 1960–1964, and for the colonies, 1962–1964.

⁵ *Report of the Committee on Representational Services Overseas, appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Plowden, 1962–1963* (Cmd 2276, 1964).

The question now is whether any further move should be made towards the merger of the Foreign Office and Commonwealth Office into a single Department and, if so, when.

15. There are three possible courses:—

- (i) to aim at making such a move in the near future (say on the retirement of the present Head of the Diplomatic Service);
- (ii) to consider whether any half-way house is advisable;
- (iii) to leave matters as they are for some time longer.

16. I examine these possibilities below.

(i) *An immediate Merger*

There is no doubt to my mind that a merger of the two Departments into a single Ministry would, on balance, be desirable, and that it could and should come about in the course of the next few years. The question of timing will, however, need careful consideration and it will be necessary to overcome certain difficulties, mainly of a practical nature:—

(a) The load on the single Secretary of State. Whatever arrangements are made at the Ministerial level, even including the appointment of a second Minister of Cabinet rank, the calls on one single Secretary of State in charge of the Department as a whole will be very considerable. It is sometimes argued that the U.S. Secretary of State carries such a burden; but in addition to the weight of responsibility for the affairs of the whole world (outside the British Isles), there is the practical point that a number of visitors will wish to see 'the man in charge' and will feel affronted if they are fobbed off with someone of the second rank. This will be all the more so, since not only Commonwealth Prime Ministers and other Ministers as well as Commonwealth High Commissioners have established the practice of calling on the Commonwealth Secretary personally, but, under the Colonial Office regime, Chief Ministers of dependent territories would also expect to be received by the Secretary of State. No doubt adjustments could be made over a period, but initially at least it will not be easy to lessen the burden on the Secretary of State without causing offence.

(b) On the substance of the work, again it may be that manageable arrangements could be made. But, certainly so long as Rhodesia remains critical and so crucial an element in British policy as a whole, it would seem essential that this should remain within the sole responsibility of a Secretary of State separate from the Foreign Secretary.

(c) There is also the practical point that, from the management point of view, the creation of the single Diplomatic Service and the absorption of the Colonial Office have already caused a major upheaval and we are still in course of organising a re-arrangement of accommodation. The merger of the F.O. and C.O. into a single Department ought to be accompanied at once by a further major reorganisation of the work (preferably on functional and geographical lines). This will take some little time to work out and to plan; ideally, it would certainly be preferable to digest the first revolution before taking on another.

17. There is also a weighty, but somewhat intangible, case against merger on Commonwealth grounds. It is in fact the case mentioned in the Plowden Report.

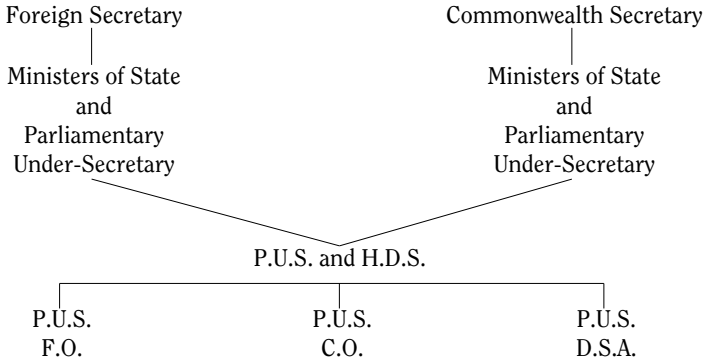
There still remains some force in the difficulties seen by the Plowden Committee on the grounds of 'implying a loss of interest in the Commonwealth partnership'. Indeed, this argument has gained in force with, on the one hand, the increased doubts about the future of the Commonwealth which have become more pronounced in the last three years and, on the other, the renewed prospect of entry into the Common Market with the anxiety to which this gives rise in Commonwealth countries.

18. But the most fundamental disadvantage in immediate merger is one that goes rather deeper than stated in the Plowden Report. We are dealing here with intangibles and it is not possible to quantify. The basic point is that one Department deals with countries that are accepted as 'foreign' and that are theoretically potential enemies; the other Department deals with countries that are not 'foreign' and are treated as actual friends. Of course, these are not absolutes, since no-one would pretend that our relations with Commonwealth countries are more friendly than our relations with the United States or, indeed, that our relations with African countries are more friendly than our relations with Western Europe. Nevertheless there is a difference which is partly the cause of history. We have had an intimate relationship with all Commonwealth countries for at least a century and with some for two centuries. It has always been a relationship in depth and, to this day, all Commonwealth countries look to Britain in a way that few if any foreign countries do. Dealings with them therefore often call for personal experience and a knowledge of the background. Moreover in all Commonwealth countries there is a substantial British element, either by settlement or in business or in the administration (including, very importantly, education). For all these reasons most High Commissioners in Commonwealth countries therefore play a public relations role that seldom needs to be carried out, at least to the same extent, by Ambassadors in foreign countries except in the United States. This difference in approach has become very clear in the impressions given by officers who have been cross-posted since the Diplomatic Service came into being. The general problem is one which the Diplomatic Service will, in any case, have to take into account in the years to come, and it should not prove insoluble (and of course it applies also on the foreign side where some degree of expertise is required in e.g. Arabic speaking, orientalism, communism). But meanwhile the problem on the Commonwealth side would be increased if there were not to be a Department in London where Ministers and officials have a special responsibility for watching these aspects.

19. For all the above reasons my view, therefore, is that it would be premature to move to the immediate creation of a single Department.

(ii) *A half-way House*

20. If it is felt that the immediate creation of a single Department would be unwise, are there any interim steps that could be taken? There is one possible plan that could be suggested which draws on recent practice in the Ministry of Defence and in the Colonial Office. Such a plan might provide for the creation of a single Department but (on the analogy of the arrangements in the Colonial Office at the end of last year) would provide that (at least for an interim period) the two Secretaries of State would remain with their separate responsibilities, but would be served by the same Department. The pattern could be as follows:—



21. That is to say, the two Secretaries of State (with Ministers of State and other Ministers—though some of the Junior Ministers could no doubt straddle the two Departments on a geographical or functional basis) would have specific functions in their separate spheres and would be served by a single Department headed by a single Permanent Under-Secretary (who would of course also be the Head of the Diplomatic Service). The Permanent Under-Secretary could have under him three Permanent Under-Secretaries subordinate to him (i.e. at the same level as in the Ministry of Defence) one of whom would be in charge of work on the F.O. side, one on the Commonwealth side and the third would be the Chief of Administration. (This would involve elevating the status of the Chief of Administration; this is not essential, but I think that under a plan of this kind it would be right.) Such a scheme looks superficially attractive and, presentationally, might have some advantages in showing that progress was being made towards eventual merger. But, like all compromises, it has inevitable disadvantages. Much would depend on close working relations between the Ministers; but even if they remained excellent there would inevitably, from time to time, be differences in policy deriving from different standpoints and, in that event, the single Permanent Under-Secretary might be in an invidious position. In any case if he were to be effective, the load on him would be extremely heavy and he would need to develop a schizophrenic personality.

22. A more serious objection is that if there is to be a single Department then, as suggested above, there ought to be a complete reorganisation of the work on functional and geographical lines. If this is not done, then the single Department is really a phoney (as were Divisions A and B in the Commonwealth Relations Office from 1947 to 1950). But if this were done, then it would make a nonsense of two Secretaries of State with separate responsibilities in Foreign and Commonwealth countries; for the division in the Department would be geographical (India with China, Rhodesia with South Africa, Canada with North America, Australia with Indonesia, etc.).

23. I do not think that it would be impossible to work out a tolerable scheme, and perhaps some further thought should be given to this matter. But my feeling is that it would not be easy to devise a smooth working arrangement. On the contrary, there would be the seeds of confusion and friction, and it might well be preferable to 'go the whole hog' from the start.

(iii) *Leaving things as they are*

24. From what I have said above, my tentative conclusion is that it would be best to leave things as they are for the time being. But, in recommending this, I would not

advocate that we should just let things drift. On the contrary, I am quite clear that (in spite of some of the problems I have mentioned) we should consciously aim at the creation of a single Department and should preferably have in mind a firm date by which this should be achieved. My own feeling is that another three or four years might be about right, and it seems to me that the change might perhaps conveniently be timed to take place around the time of the next Election (which may well be some time in 1970). If a radical reorganisation of the work is to be brought about with the creation of the new Department, there is an immense amount of planning to be done in advance and it is by no means too early to start setting this in train now.

171 FCO 77/31, no 5

8 May 1967

'The future of the CO/FO': minute by Sir P Gore-Booth to Mr Thomson

I hope we can have an early discussion about Sir Saville Garner's paper,¹ since I think it important that we should clear our minds on this subject before too long.

2. I will leave my full comments for our meeting, but you may like to have these preliminary observations.

3. I agree that there are three possible courses open to us and I entirely agree with Sir Saville that the second course—a Half-Way house—would not make any sense. It would run the risk of being both phoney and unworkable, since it would create the appearance of one organisation working for the reality of two Secretaries of State. On the first course, i.e. an immediate merger, I must confess that I am not entirely convinced by the argument of the load on a single Secretary of State. I cannot foresee a time when, under our present system of working with the demands that are made upon a Secretary of State by Parliament, the department and travel (internal and external) the burden will not remain intolerable. This problem will have to be faced some time and I doubt whether a year or two's delay is going to help.

4. It is not for the Foreign Office to comment upon the Commonwealth aspect of matters discussed in paragraphs 17 and 18 of the paper. But it is, of course, the duty of the Diplomatic Service to train all officers so that they can operate equally effectively in Commonwealth and foreign countries.

5. If the decision is to leave things as they are, I think it very important that we should not let them stagnate. It looks to me as though these useful discussions could and should result in a definite objective towards which to work. Sir C. Crowe tells me that the DSAO already have a number of ideas about an amalgamated office, and the policy they are at present following, e.g. in the step-by-step integration of departments in the two offices, is directed towards this end. It might now be helpful if, without any prejudice to the decision ultimately taken or, if affirmative, the date ultimately chosen, the DSAO could be invited to do a purely hypothetical blueprint for a combined office. This would probably throw up ideas and problems which are relevant and which would have to be discussed if we were to go ahead.

¹ See 170.

172 FCO 73/103

16 Feb 1968

'Relations with the Commonwealth Office': minute by D J D Maitland¹ to Sir P Gore-Booth

The Foreign Secretary and Commonwealth Secretary met for a general discussion this morning for an hour. At the end of the meeting Mr. Brighty² and I were called in and given the following joint report.

2. The two Secretaries of State discussed the general issues of which the present trouble over the Falkland Islands was a symptom. They agreed that they should meet next week, together with the senior officials from the two Departments, to discuss our general attitude to the remaining decolonisation problems and to the questions of Gibraltar, the Falkland Islands and British Honduras in particular. Hong Kong might also be raised. The purpose would be to attempt to lay down certain general principles for handling these problems and to see how they could be applied to the individual disputes. In each case we should consider our own interests and the effect of our policies on the local inhabitants and on our relations with the other countries concerned.

3. The Secretaries of State also discussed the kind of statement which the Governor of the Falkland Islands might make on his return. They did not discuss any particular form of words, but agreed that Sir Cosmo Haskard³ should say on his return what it was necessary for the Islanders to know. There should be no reference in his statement to the Gibraltar dispute and he should not go into the issue which remained to be decided in London.

4. The Foreign Secretary had said that reading through the Falkland Islands paper had led him to conclude that, on some subjects at least, the two Departments were not acting as one service or as one external Department. He had therefore suggested that you, Sir S. Garner and Sir M. James should meet in order to work out some more satisfactory *modus vivendi*. The Commonwealth Secretary had agreed to this suggestion.

5. The Commonwealth Secretary had suggested that there should be more co-ordination in the briefing of the Foreign Secretary and himself for meetings of the Cabinet and the O.P.D. on issues in which there was a common external policy interest. He quoted as an example the O.P.D. meeting 10 days ago when non-proliferation had been discussed. His own brief told him that there was no Commonwealth interest, and it would clearly have been valuable if he had had a copy of the brief prepared for Mr. Mulley, whom he could then have supported in his argument with the Defence Secretary. It was for the Departments to work out whether this co-ordination take place at desk level or through the two Private Offices. The Foreign Secretary agreed with this suggestion. He thought briefs on external questions should be exchanged as a matter of course.

6. Brunei had also been discussed. The Commonwealth Secretary had said that he proposed to visit Brunei on his way to the Ministerial meeting of the SEATO Council.

¹ Head of FO News Dept, 1965–1967; principal private secretary to foreign secretary/foreign and Commonwealth secretary, 1967–1969.

² A D Brighty, assistant private secretary to Mr Thomson, 1967–1968.

³ Governor of the Falkland Islands, see 316–331.

7. The SEATO Council meeting itself had also been discussed and Mr. Brown asked that the Commonwealth Secretary should be provided with records of the last SEATO Council meeting and that he should be provided, immediately before the meeting, with the most up-to-date briefing on Vietnam. He wanted the Department to put Mr. Thomson fully in the picture on the recent talks in Moscow and Washington and on the discussions with U Thant.⁴

⁴ UN secretary-general.

173 FCO 49/136, no 11

26 Feb 1968

[The Commonwealth Office and planning]: minute by J O Moreton.¹

Annex: paper by A H Reed²

I am afraid I have kept these papers owing to pressure of more urgent work.

2. I have read with interest Mr. Walker's³ minute of 12 January 1967. I attach a copy of a minute by Mr. Reed written towards the end of 1966 which reinforces many of the arguments in Mr. Walker's minute.

3. Since Mr. Walker's minute was written, I suggest that there have been a number of developments affecting a review of our planning machinery. In the first place I think that the Foreign Office and Commonwealth Office have, in general, moved more closely together, and the concept of a joint external affairs department is a good deal nearer realisation. Secondly, major decisions in the field of foreign and defence policy have been taken which, whether we like it or not, mean a much greater concentration on Europe and a greatly diminished place for the Commonwealth in our future policy.

4. Although one might deduce from this that the need for a strengthened Commonwealth Office planning unit has decreased, I do not think that this is so in the immediate future. It seems to me that there is a great need for stock-taking and policy planning in relation to the Commonwealth as a whole in the light of the new European policy. The need for this, to my mind, was underlined by the recent review of external policy prepared by the Foreign Office Planning Department in the preparation of which we had little part; but, when given the opportunity, we were not really ready to say what fundamental features of Commonwealth policy we wanted included.

5. My own conclusions are that we are not quite ready for a joint planning unit with the Foreign Office; we need a strengthened unit of our own first to undertake a number of specifically Commonwealth studies. We could then, in a year or two, merge more successfully with the Foreign Office Planning Dept. from a position of greater strength.

I would think that any such strengthened planning unit might report to a DUSS as in the Foreign Office and should be firmly guided by a Commonwealth Office steering committee.

¹ India and Burma, 1942–1945; CO from 1946 (served in Kenya, 1953–1955); CRO from 1960 (served at Lagos, 1961–1964); assistant under-secretary of state, CRO, 1965–1966, Commonwealth Office, 1966–1968. Moreton later served in Vietnam, Malta, UK Mission to UN (New York), and Washington.

² CRO/Commonwealth Office, 1962–1968; head (in 1968) of Far Eastern and Pacific Dept (see 104).

³ Commonwealth Policy and Planning Dept, Commonwealth Office.

Annex to 173: 'The idea of a Commonwealth Office Planning Staff'

In the six months that I have been in this Department I have been greatly impressed by the tactical advantages to the Foreign Office of their Planning Staff.⁴ I have been even more impressed by the need for an assessment of what are Britain's real interests overseas and what policies we should seek to pursue in attaining them.

2. I imagine that down to 1945 no particular planning other than of a purely military nature was considered either necessary or desirable. The military issues were then quite straightforward—the preservation of the United Kingdom and of its overseas dependencies and associates. From 1945 we entered upon a period of uncertainty, both military and economic. We had certain general policies of which probably the most important were the containment of Russia in the West, primarily with the United States' support, and decolonisation. There seems now a tendency to assume that the first of these objectives has been more or less attained, while the other is in sight of achievement. Decolonisation was a policy which, it was generally assumed a decade ago, would lead to the creation of a multiracial Commonwealth whose members would be at the worst friendly to Britain, and generally speaking 'right thinking'. A great deal of diplomatic and economic endeavour has been expended in the hope of creating such an association of states.

3. Having reached the end, almost, of our colonial era, we seem also to have arrived at a stage of indecision in which we have no clear idea as to the courses our overseas policies should follow. This indecision is unsettling to ourselves and disturbing to our friends. We give more than ever in the past the impression of illogicality and muddled thinking. To the outsider it must seem strange that while claiming that E.E.C. membership will be a panacea for our economic ills, we let the same economic ills lead us towards withdrawing a substantial part of our military commitment in Europe. This cannot be reassuring to the Europeans since E.E.C. membership will necessarily lead us to a considerable degree of political and military assimilation with Europe. In the Far East we oppose Communism, but are not prepared to fight it in Vietnam. We constantly dither about whether or not we can afford to remain in the Far East, and if we do decide to remain we have no clear idea of the role of our forces or whether we are likely to be able to go on maintaining forces of the right kind for the roles which we may finally decide they should play. We talk about our peace-keeping obligations, but are prepared to withdraw from Aden in the face of almost certain conflict after we have left. On the economic side we struggle to maintain the value of the pound as a reserve currency, but there is no informed debate as to whether or not we would be better off without the sterling area.

4. In the past illogicalities and mistakes in overseas and defence policy were not of the first significance. We had sufficient military, financial and commercial reserves

⁴ Reed's 1966 paper is not specifically dated. That the Commonwealth Office was disadvantaged in its relations with the FO because it did not have a specialist planning staff was a constant refrain of Commonwealth Office officials. See especially the comments by Reed on a circular letter to heads of mission sent by Gore-Booth, 3 Oct 1966. Gore-Booth's letter explained how he had responded immediately when the incoming foreign secretary, George Brown, voiced his opinion that the FO had little by way of coherent mechanisms for future policy-making. Gore-Booth argued the FO was well positioned in this respect. Reed agreed, suggesting (6 Oct 1966) that this gave the FO the edge when foreign policy impinged on the work of other departments, especially the Commonwealth Office and the MoD (FCO 49/72).

to be able to pick them up, but it is doubtful if we can afford these sort of setbacks much longer.

5. It is true that a great deal of planning goes on in Whitehall, but not all of it is inter-related and much of it stems from the economic requirements of the present hour. This is particularly true of defence planning. Logically, the armed forces are merely one of several tools in the hands of makers of foreign policy. It would seem reasonable therefore to decide your foreign policy first and to fit your defence forces into its framework. In recent years we have done it the other way round. We have decided first how much we can afford to spend on our defence forces, and our foreign policy has been modified to take into account the size of those forces. This is a certain way of ensuring that you get the wrong kind of forces for an unsatisfactory set of policies. It may well be that the more traditional approach would enable a reduction in defence expenditure and a more active and satisfactory overseas policy.

6. If the preceding paragraphs set out the general difficulties for Whitehall as a whole, I think they have particular relevance to the Commonwealth Office. With Britain's changing circumstances we find that a substantial number of major problems of overseas policy fall in areas in which the Commonwealth Office has the primary interest. British policy today is far more concerned with Africa than it is with the Middle East. Its interests in the Far East revolve far more around Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand—and India and Pakistan—than they do around Japan or even Red China. The problems of Thailand and Vietnam are of direct importance to Commonwealth countries in the area. It is therefore arguable that so long as there are two separate Offices dealing with external affairs in Whitehall it is in those areas that the Commonwealth Office should take the lead rather than the Foreign Office. At the moment it is the Foreign Office that makes the running on Far Eastern problems. I think the Commonwealth Office should have a much stronger voice in forming policy in this area than it does at present. To do this we would need a small planning staff. At present, I understand, the Commonwealth Policy and Planning Department has no direct planning role other than the relation to the constitutional problems of decolonisation. In the past it has studied from time to time the possible future of the Commonwealth, but rather as a forecast than as a basis for a conscious policy.

7. I do not think that we need any large organisation. Two or three people would be quite sufficient provided that they did nothing but planning.

8. It may be argued that we should do better if we had a joint planning staff with the Foreign Office. There are attractions in this. But I am convinced that if we started this way we would be unable to sustain Commonwealth Office interests in the joint studies that were prepared. It would be far better to start with a viable Commonwealth Office unit which could later, when the time might be ripe, join its Foreign Office counterpart. What is needed is a body which, in co-operation with Departments in the Office, can help frame advice to the Commonwealth Secretary on the appropriate policies to be pursued by this country in promoting the United Kingdom's interests in and with the Commonwealth.

9. At an even later stage there would seem advantage in a joint body with the Ministry of Defence and Treasury which could consider frankly all policy aspects of our overseas relations. Although the Ministry of Defence contains large planning organisations, these concern themselves almost entirely with the disposal of existing military resources and the provision of future ones. The machine is too ponderous to

consider the sort of necessarily hypothetical questions that planners have to examine. A small unit in the Defence Secretariat which could discuss policy matters with the political and economic departments would be a first requirement for any satisfactory co-operation.

10. One final point which I want to mention is that while any Commonwealth Office planning staff would necessarily have to help on short-term policy questions, its primary role would be to advise on long-term policies—the broad aims our external relations should seek to achieve. The weakness of the present Foreign Office organisation is that it is rather prone to attach long-term labels to short-term plans of expediency.

A.H.R.

[nd]

174 FCO 77/31, no 29

18 Mar 1968

‘The handling of the dependent territories work’: minute by Lord Shepherd to Mr Thomson

At our meeting last Thursday I mentioned to you briefly the deep concern I feel at the steady loss of experience and expertise from the Dependent Territories side of the Office.

2. I realise that we cannot continue to keep on indefinitely the dwindling number of former Colonial Office officials without affecting their career prospects. None the less I am worried by the prospective rate of rundown this year in particular, coupled with the elimination of one of our two Assistant Under-Secretary posts which I had not previously known about. The effect of this will inevitably be to throw more responsibility and an even heavier burden on the two or three top people on this side of the House who have the background and experience of handling colonial problems.

3. I am not sure that it is sufficiently widely understood how different the work on Dependent Territories is from the other work handled in the Commonwealth Office. On the Dependent Territories side we are essentially an administrative department, and have to perform for our dependent territories a variety of services and functions which derive from the fact of our direct responsibility for the territories, and do not have their counterpart in our relations with independent countries. And, as I have discovered since taking over responsibility for the Dependent Territories, we are constantly being required to exercise some pretty fine judgments. If our judgments are wrong, the decisions we take can lead us into considerable Parliamentary difficulties, and more than that into great trouble in the territories themselves which it is then our responsibility to sort out (including at most the despatch of troops). I would therefore enter a special plea that we should make it our business to ensure that on the Dependant Territories side we are not denuded of too many of our most senior experienced people. When I visit Colonial territories I hear this worry constantly expressed by Governors and politicians.

4. Since I raised this with you there has been the announcement of the amalgamation of the Commonwealth Office and the Foreign Office. I am afraid this is bound to cause much additional anxiety in the Dependent Territories. They will feel

that their interests will be lost in the much bigger organisation, that they will inevitably be treated like a lot of Orphan Annies,¹ and that whenever there is a clash between a dependent territory's interest and a foreign policy consideration it will always be the latter which will prevail. I think it is in disputed territories like Gibraltar, the Falklands and British Honduras that these fears will be felt most acutely.

5. I must add that, in my view, there will be some substance in these fears unless:—

- (a) there continues to be in the amalgamated office a Minister of State with primary responsibility for looking after the dependent territories—a Minister whom the latter can regard as 'their' Minister, under the Secretary of State; and
- (b) he has a reasonable administrative machine, with a leavening of experienced people, working to him, whose job it will be to watch over the interests of the Dependent Territories and supervise their administration and development.

In other words, responsibility for the Dependent Territories should not, in my considered opinion, be distributed throughout the amalgamated office on a geographical basis.

6. I realise it is still early days. None the less I felt that I should take this opportunity of registering these views with you before our meeting this afternoon.

¹ Orphan Annie: US cartoon character from 1920s, and the subject of a Broadway musical—'Annie'—first performed in 1977.

175 FCO 77/31, no 30

19 Mar 1968

[Merger of the Commonwealth Office and FO]: minute by Mr Wilson to Mr Stewart

On Friday we announced the Government's intention to amalgamate the Foreign Office and Commonwealth Office. There has been some Press suggestion that the new Department will be called the Ministry of External Affairs or the Ministry of Overseas Affairs. This will not be so. Apart from the traditional and affectionate use of the word 'Office', which should be retained, I feel that something on the lines of 'Foreign and Commonwealth Office' would be right. But you may have a better suggestion.

The next step is clearly to prepare a plan and a timetable for the amalgamation. I realise, of course, that a good deal of preparatory work will already have been done, though presumably the timetable envisaged in this preparatory work will now have to be considerably accelerated. Indeed, as you know, my purpose in announcing the amalgamation last Friday night was to make it clear that the decisive option in this matter had then been taken. This being so, the sooner effect can be given to it—and be seen to have been given to it—the better.

I should therefore be grateful if, in consultation with the Commonwealth Secretary and, as appropriate, the Head of the Home Civil Service, you would prepare a plan for the amalgamation, but I should be glad also if you would let me have an early indication of the broad lines on which you would contemplate this being undertaken and some indication of the time by which you hope it would be completed.

I am copying this minute to the Commonwealth Secretary, Sir Laurence Helsby and Sir Burke Trend.

176 FCO 77/32, no 40 21 Mar 1968
[Merger of the Commonwealth Office and FO]: minute by Mr Rodgers to Mr Stewart on the arrangements for handling dependent territories

My experience of the Foreign Office is of course a great deal less than Alun Chalfont's. I wonder however whether I might put forward two related points about the merger of the Offices which arise directly from my particular responsibilities over the last year or so.

2. First, I would have thought that decisions on how to organise the day-to-day running of the combined Office are prior to any consideration about the Ministerial structure. It would be as wrong to consider the Ministerial structure and work downwards as to allow the future pattern to be determined in any way by the present incumbents (not that it will be).

3. Second, I am sure that it is right that the relevant regional departments should be wholly responsible for the remaining Colonial territories which come within them. In other words Hong Kong and Gibraltar, to take two examples, should not be left in separate compartments but integrated fully with the Far Eastern Department and Central Department, if this is what they continue to be called.

4. I take this view strongly because of the problems of consultation—and occasionally the dangers of conflict or misunderstanding—which I have seen over the last year in both cases. No doubt the integration of the two Offices would deal in part with this problem. Assuming however that some of the present traditions are carried over, there would be a danger if these Colonial territories were even left in a separate department within the combined Office, removed from the region of which they are an essential part. It may be that the internal problems of these territories are of a special nature which policy departments would be less well equipped to deal with. If this is so, it would presumably be possible to have a functional department in parallel whose rôle it would be to advise on internal problems without having the final say in policy making.

5. This of course could have a bearing on the Ministerial structure. I would take the view, contrary to what I understand Alun Chalfont to be saying, that responsibility for dependent territories like Hong Kong and Gibraltar should not be under a separate Minister but under the Minister responsible for the region as a whole.

177 FCO 49/137, no 7 27 Mar 1968
'Merger of the Foreign Office and Commonwealth Office: minute by Mr Stewart to Mr Wilson

Thank you for your minute of 19 March¹ about the proposed amalgamation of the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Office.

¹ See 175.

2. We had already been giving preliminary consideration to this and I have now set up the necessary organisation in the D.S.A.O. to work out the detailed arrangements. Those concerned will report to the Commonwealth Secretary and to myself from time to time. We are setting ourselves 1 October as a target date. If there is to be a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' meeting during October this will give us the opportunity of showing that the Secretary of State for the combined Office is as much concerned with Commonwealth as with Foreign affairs.

3. The main division of the departments within the new Office should be geographical; but they will need to be supported by powerful functional departments to look after the particular interests of the Commonwealth. We shall also need strong economic and defence divisions. We propose to take the opportunity to improve our arrangements for handling export promotion work.

4. The distribution of Ministerial work will obviously have to be carefully thought out. With a single Secretary of State it is very important, if the Commonwealth is not to appear to be downgraded, that this work should be divided by region and function and not by division between foreign countries on the one hand and the countries and territories of the Commonwealth on the other. We shall have to consider in particular how the administrative problems of the Dependent Territories can best be handled.

5. George Thomson and I agree that there is much to be said for retaining the word 'Office' in the new title. We have considered the possibilities of 'Foreign and Commonwealth Office', 'Commonwealth and Foreign Office', and 'Foreign Office'. The first two of these suggestions raise awkward problems whether 'Foreign' or 'Commonwealth' should come first. At some stage it may be desirable to seek the views of Parliament on this question of nomenclature.

6. Although a good deal of contingency planning has already been undertaken, six months is a very short time in which to make satisfactory personnel arrangements. The amalgamation is bound to lead to some worsening of career prospects. We must avoid inflicting hardship which might affect the morale of a Service which has already been subjected to strains and stresses in recent years. When we know where we stand our officials will approach the Treasury about this and we shall expect sympathetic and generous treatment. We shall need a good deal of flexibility in our initial establishment and a year or two in which the organisation can settle down.

7. In order to achieve the date of 1 October we shall need decanting space to be able to move departments around and some structural alterations may be necessary. For this we shall have to look to the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works. I am sure we can count on their cooperation but I hope that they will agree to give our requirements first priority.

8. The re-organisation is bound to cause much upheaval. I think therefore that we should reconsider the timing and scope of the proposed independent review of overseas expenditure. Apart from the complications of setting up the Review Board itself those officials who would have to prepare papers for it would be the same as those who will have to work on the amalgamation. We shall in fact be reviewing our overseas establishments very actively during this period. Not only are we just completing inspections of some of our major posts but we are also about to embark on an exercise in output budgeting. To defer the proposed review would bring the added advantage that the study of the question of our non-military presence overseas

in future years should have made progress and give us a clearer picture of what will be required overseas.

9. In view of the interest which has been expressed in the House and the fact that the proposed change may also cause some anxiety in the Commonwealth I think we should be ready to say something more in public. I suggest that you might consider making a Statement in the House or answering an inspired Question. I attach a draft Statement with Notes for Supplementaries.²

10. I am sending copies of this minute and its enclosures to the Commonwealth Secretary, Sir Laurence Helsby and Sir Burke Trend.

² Not printed.

178 FCO 49/137, no 10 29 Mar 1968
[Merger of the Commonwealth Office and FO]: inward telegram no 183 from Sir I MacLennan¹ to Commonwealth Office on the reaction in New Zealand

Widespread misunderstanding in press of New Zealand followed London announcement of intention to amalgamate Commonwealth and Foreign Offices. The issue was confused and the true import was lost to journalists by the simultaneous announcement of the resignation of Mr Brown.²

2. The first announcement appeared in the papers here on 16th under headlines announcing Mr Brown's resignation, e.g. under headline 'Mr Brown resigns in gold crisis', Taranaki Herald said, 'The announcement that his resignation had been accepted also came up with the surprise development that the Foreign Office is to be merged with the Commonwealth Office, both to be under Mr Stewart'.

3. The despatches from New Zealand correspondents resident in London contributed nothing to the cause of understanding in their home papers. The following is a typical example from the NZ Press Association London correspondent datelined 18 March. Under the headline 'Joining two Offices sign of dissolution', this despatch printed in a number of NZ dailies said, 'Movement towards amalgamation of the two Offices has been noticeable for many months but this has now been accelerated, exposing once and for all the way the Commonwealth itself is heading towards effective dissolution. It is also an illustration of the determination of the British Government to become "European" and will strain still further the Anglo-New Zealand special relationship and the understanding on which New Zealand's trade in primary products so heavily depends'.

4. Editorial comment generally harped on the theme that Britain wished to be rid of the Commonwealth. Thus the Waikato Times said, 'The Commonwealth, seen from Mr Wilson's desk at all events, is a millstone around the British neck. Hell bent for acceptance by the Europeans that move which peremptorily merged the Commonwealth and Foreign Offices puts us (and Canada and all the rest) on a par, as another editorial pen expressed it, with China, France, and any other country that has little in common with Britain', while the influential New Zealand Herald said, 'by

¹ High commissioner, Wellington, 1964–1969.

² On 15 Mar 1968.

choosing a time of Cabinet turmoil to announce the lumping together of the Commonwealth Office and the Foreign Office, the British Government certainly does not convey the impression that decisions are being based on calm and collective reasoning. In effect, the Wilson Government is telling members of the Commonwealth that they are now just as foreign as China, France and any other country that has little in common with Britain'. And the Southland Times, 'New Zealand is not likely to gain from the change, because Mr Stewart can be expected faithfully to carry out government policy.' But the Herald sees a snub to New Zealand in the decision to lump together under Mr Stewart's supervision both the Commonwealth Office and the Foreign Office. . . . 'The British Labour Government has already been under the suspicion that it is less appreciative of Commonwealth ties than the Tories, who grew up with a stronger tradition of Empire than Labour and possibly of responsibilities to overseas people. Economic pressure may explain most of Labour's recent actions, but the Far East withdrawal decisions and the measures against coloured immigration seem to support ideas of a shrinkage of Labour interest in the overseas British. If the Commonwealth is to have any real meaning, something special in the relationship between Britain and her overseas partners must be preserved. A Foreign Secretary who has the whole world to deal with cannot give the more intimate attentions to Commonwealth matters that a separated minister with some travelling time could be expected to devote to them.'

The sentiments typified in above quotations were expressed and similar conclusions reached in the course of a panel discussion of the question on the NZBC National programme series 'point of view' after the nine pm news of Sunday 17 March.

179 FCO 49/137, no 19

5 Apr 1968

'Combined FO/CO organisation: alternative scheme for handling the dependent territories': joint note by Sir M James and Sir A Galsworthy

There are real differences between the nature of the work arising in London in respect of Dependent Territories, and that arising from our relations with independent countries.

2. These differences stem from the basic fact that the Secretary of State is responsible (and answerable to Parliament) for all that goes on in the Dependent Territories. We are thus deeply involved in every facet of policy in the territories: the organisation and maintenance of good government, law and order; the political and constitutional institutions and their proper functioning and development; the organisation of the local public services; the formulation and execution of the territories' economic, financial and social policies; the organisation of their social services and public utilities; their commerce and industry; the examination and approval of their legislation; their defence—in short, the whole field of government and administration (including such things as the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy in capital cases). The smaller and less developed the territory, the greater its dependence on us for help and guidance in all these matters.

3. Because of the basic similarity and homogeneity of the work on Dependent Territories wherever they may be situated, there is a strong case for:—

- (a) *not* mixing up Dependent Territories and independent countries in the same department;
- (b) grouping all the political departments dealing with Dependent Territories together, as at present in the Commonwealth Office, working up through Under Secretaries to a Deputy Secretary, who would be primarily responsible for Dependent Territories, and to a Minister of State.

People with knowledge and experience of dealing with Dependent Territories are steadily becoming fewer, and the diffusion of responsibility for the Dependent Territories throughout the merged office could lead to differences in approach and policy which sooner or later would cause difficulty and embarrassment. (We are at present engaged in constitutional advance and experiment in no less than thirteen territories, all of which could interact on each other.)

4. A Deputy Under Secretary with no executive power and no control over operating departments would soon lose touch with the political backgrounds against which decisions on Dependent Territories affairs must be taken (and it is not possible to separate their administrative and internal constitutional affairs from their political contexts).

5. There are aspects of our administration of Dependent Territories which involve important external considerations—Hong Kong, Gibraltar, the Falklands and British Honduras in particular. Often in these cases our foreign policy interests, and our responsibilities to the Dependent Territories concerned, pull in opposite directions. The Commonwealth Office departments dealing with these Dependent Territories are accustomed to working in close consultation with Foreign Office geographical departments in regard to all those aspects of the affairs of their territories which involve external considerations; this consultation could still continue in the merged office. There would also have to be close consultation, as at present, at Under Secretary and Deputy Under Secretary level. (It is to be noted that the great bulk of the work of the C.O. departments dealing with these disputed territories is not such as to involve consultation with the F.O. geographical departments, but has to do with the many administrative, internal, political and economic matters referred to in paragraph 2 above.)

6. Two alternative groupings of the departments concerned are suggested below. Either of them would preserve in the merged office the necessary expertise to enable the Secretary of State to discharge his direct responsibilities for the Dependent Territories, including his responsibility to Parliament.

Alternative A

	Gibraltar and South Atlantic Dept.
A.U.S.	Pacific and Indian Ocean Dept.
	Hong Kong Dept.
D.U.S.	
	Dependent Territories Department
	Associated States Department
A.U.S.	West Indian Department
	(All the Dependent Territories in the Western hemisphere.)

(N.B. If necessary, one or more Subject Departments could be added to the schedule of the second A.U.S.)

Alternative B

The Hong Kong Department and Pacific and Indian Ocean Departments to be brigaded with the Far Eastern Department, the A.U.S. concerned working in respect of the two former departments to the D.U.S. responsible for Dependent Territories. In that case the second A.U.S. would have the following schedule:—

Gibraltar and South Atlantic Department
 West Indian Department
 Associated States Department
 Dependent Territories Department

180 FCO 73/16, nos 16 & 14

10 & 17 Apr 1968

[Merger of the Commonwealth Office and FO]: minutes by Mr Mulley and Lord Shepherd

I agree that it is important that we ensure that the administrative problems of the Dependent territories receive just as much care and attention as hitherto, and that to that end we should safeguard after amalgamation the present expertise available in the Commonwealth Office; though this latter consideration cannot over the longer term be allowed to stand in the way of the normal career rotations of staff in the single Diplomatic Service any more than it did in the former separate Commonwealth and Foreign Services.

2. I think the best solution is likely to lie in establishing a separate group of 'functional' departments, under an Assistant Under-Secretary, to be responsible for the administrative problems of the dependent territories (budgets, loans and grant aid, staff etc.) and for constitutional matters. But I am sure we shall be throwing away one of the major benefits of amalgamation if we do not introduce from the outset the principle that the 'external relations' of each dependent territory (for want of a better word) must be handled by the geographical Department responsible for that part of the world. I do not want to labour the case in favour of this, but if it had been the practice in the past we might have been able to avoid some problems over the Falkland Islands and Gibraltar, and, at an earlier period, Cyprus, that have given successive Governments such trouble in Parliament.

3. On a more general point, I am still not happy that amalgamation will apparently save us so very few staff, particularly in the Under-Secretary grades. If we are going to continue to be under attack within the Government, and particularly from the Treasury, and in Parliament for the size of the Diplomatic Service Vote, I am not sure that tactically we should not take the initiative by offering to reduce the size of our total establishment at home, using the occasion of the amalgamation to secure proper terms for redundancy or transfer to the Home Civil Service—conditions which would otherwise be difficult to secure.

F.M.
 10.4.68

Foreign secretary

I have seen a copy of Fred Mulley's minute to you of 10 April about the handling of the Dependent Territories in the merged office. As the Minister at present responsible to George Thomson for the administration of the Dependent Territories,

and also because I have inherited from George Thomas responsibilities for staff matters in the Commonwealth Office, including merger, I thought it might be as well for me to send you a note of my views on this question; and I am copying it to George Thomson to see in his constituency, and also to Fred Mulley himself.

2. I am afraid that the suggestion which Fred Mulley makes in the second paragraph of his minute would be impracticable, for the reasons set out below.

3. Experience of actually dealing with the problems of the Dependent Territories strongly suggests the need to maintain a departmental structure in the merged office which would provide for the separate handling of Dependent Territories' affairs. Integration with geographical departments dealing with our relations with independent countries may have *prima facie* attraction, but it disregards the realities of the position. There is a basic difference between the nature of our work on relations with independent countries, which is of a representative character, and our direct responsibility for the government of Dependent Territories and the well-being of their people; in the discharge of this responsibility to the people themselves and to Parliament the Secretary of State has to exercise actual authority. This basic consideration is explained in more detail in the attached note prepared in the Commonwealth Office.¹

4. Fred Mulley's compromise solution comes nearer to meeting the requirements of the relationship just described than the actual plan put up by the DSAO; and for that I am certainly grateful. The trouble about his suggestion is, however, that it is not in practice possible to separate the administrative and constitutional problems of Dependent Territories from their 'external relations'. There is an inextricable mixture between the internal problems of the Dependent Territories and their external relations, as the following few examples will show:—

(a) We now have to deal with a demand from the Government of British Honduras for an early Constitutional Conference leading to Independence. It is impossible to deal with this in isolation from the dispute with Guatemala or the position on the mediation.

(b) We have just had to deal with a proposal by the local elected Ministers in Gibraltar that if there are any further Spanish restrictions on the land frontier, the Gibraltar Government should ban Spanish workers from coming into Gibraltar and adjust the economy accordingly. But while labour matters and immigration policy are normally regarded as internal matters, such a measure in Gibraltar would bear immediate external repercussions. In fact, all the internal problems of Gibraltar are coloured by the Spanish claim; and, in particular, the problems of Gibraltar's economy are basically affected by Spanish restrictions.

(c) Similarly, in Hong Kong the very big volume of work on internal matters—the maintenance of law and order, the role and composition of the garrison, progress on the labour front, the reorganisation of the local government structure, the handling of all the Colony's economic and social problems, the questions that arise over the organisation of the Port and so forth—must all be handled with reference to likely reactions on the part of Communist China to any given course of action. Last year, for instance, in handling the bombing attacks we had to deal with a widespread public demand in Hong Kong for the imposition of the death penalty for carrying bombs. This was certainly an internal matter, but, needless to say, it

¹ Not printed.

was external considerations as much as anything which led us to resist the demand. Conversely, all the C.P.G.'s 'demands' affecting Hong Kong would have serious consequences in the Colony itself—e.g. if we were to release in the Colony all the convicted persons whom the Chinese are pressing us to let loose.

(d) Again, to take an example from the Bahamas, recently the internal security forces in the Bahamas have arrested 77 Haitians engaged in arms training there, with a view to action against the present regime in Haiti. What the Bahamas Government now do with these people clearly involves both internal and external considerations.

(e) It is not only where we have predatory neighbours that the administration of dependent territories involves external considerations. In the Pacific we, Australia, New Zealand and the United States have agreed that we should try to achieve as much co-ordination as we can between our respective colonial policies. We have regular contacts and meetings to this end. And there are many facets of interdependence in this area in the realm of civil aviation, economics and so forth.

5. Fred Mulley says in his minute that if the administration of Dependent Territories had been integrated with the departments conducting our relations with independent countries 'we might have been able to avoid some problems over the Falkland Islands and Gibraltar, and, at an earlier period, Cyprus. . . .' I think, on the contrary, that the differences of view and clashes of political aim which have certainly existed in respect of the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Cyprus and elsewhere, have been inherent in the situation, have in no way been created by the existence of different organs in the Whitehall machine, and are in no way likely to be conjured out of existence by organisational readjustments affecting UK Departments.

6. I ought here to stress again that the responsibilities of the Secretary of State, and his subordinate Ministers, extend to every conceivable aspect of life within the Dependent Territories. In respect of those aspects, Ministers are answerable to Parliament. Members of both Houses have in the past conducted a vigilant and persistent inquisition of Ministers in the discharge of these responsibilities, and clearly will go on doing so. This fact alone gives a special Parliamentary emphasis to the work of departments in London dealing with Dependent Territories, which is not paralleled in the work of, for example, the Foreign Office departments or the Commonwealth Office departments dealing with independent Commonwealth countries.

7. One feature of dependency is that the territories do not have their own diplomatic representatives in London. At present, they look to the Commonwealth Secretary as their sponsor and friend. In the merged office they are likely to look in the first instance to the Minister of State who is responsible for them, and, under him, to the Dependent Territories departments. They will look to him and those departments to safeguard their interests irrespective of other pressures which may be placed on Her Majesty's Government, including those of predatory neighbours. I feel sure you will agree that it is not only necessary that their interests should be properly safeguarded, but that the nature of the safeguard should be public and obvious. In this connection I might refer to the Parliamentary interest already shown by Nigel Fisher's Question to the Prime Minister of 9 April. I believe that if this responsibility were split in the manner suggested by Fred Mulley it would cause grave suspicion and misgivings in the Dependent Territories, which would inevitably be reflected in the press and Parliament here. Even as things are the Governments

and peoples of Dependent Territories have shown signs of feeling that HMG is less interested in their aspirations and welfare than in the past.

8. For all these reasons I believe that there is an important point of principle involved in what we decide about the handling of the Dependent Territories in the merged Office. May I suggest that as soon as possible there should be a meeting between you and George Thomson, Fred Mulley and myself, to discuss the problem?²

S.
17.4.68

² D J D Maitland commented (18 Apr) on Shepherd's arguments: 'The Dependent Territories Division seem to lose no opportunity of putting forward their special needs. In the [Shepherd] minute below it seems to me that the examples quoted either contradict or at least do not support Lord Shepherd's main thesis.' Stewart agreed and decided against the meeting Shepherd wanted, preferring instead to discuss the matter with Gore-Booth and Thomson.

181 FCO 77/33, no 65A 24 Apr 1968
**[Merger of the Commonwealth Office and the FO]: letter from M
 MacDonald (Nairobi) to Mr Thomson on the title of the merged office**

I think I should let you know that three Kenyan Ministers have told me on different occasions recently that they read a newspaper report of remarks you are alleged to have made in New Zealand or Australia to the effect that when the Commonwealth Office and the Foreign Office are amalgamated later this year the new Ministry will be called simply the Foreign Office.¹ They expressed strong criticism of this prospect. I answered that I did not myself see any such report (perhaps only because I was travelling at the time, and not in touch with well informed papers), and that I would be very doubtful about the accuracy of the report.

2. I do hope I am right in expressing that doubt. It would, of course, cause a lot of alarm and despondency in the Commonwealth, and among the Commonwealth's keen supporters, if the Ministry in London dealing with Britain's relations with her Commonwealth partners was simply called the 'Foreign Office'. Quite apart from the fact that the Australians, New Zealanders and some other Commonwealth populations are not 'foreigners' at all, and would be deeply hurt by any such description or implication, vast numbers of our Asian, African and other friends in the Commonwealth attach great importance to the Commonwealth connection, regarding it as something rather special, and different from the general run of foreign relations. They believe that, in spite of present day stresses, the Commonwealth has a unique part to play through the next period of human history in establishing sensible, friendly inter-racial relations throughout the world. I fear—and the Kenyan Ministers fear—that if there were no mention of the Commonwealth in the amalgamated Ministry's title, this would be widely regarded as an indication of the British Government's and people's supposed loss of interest in the Commonwealth, which I referred to in my letter of 5 April to you. But I feel sure you know this; so please forgive me for writing at such length on the topic.

¹ Thomson was 'dismayed' the Commonwealth Office had not already advised posts how *The Times* had been incorrect when it suggested in a leader of 6 Apr that the title of the merged office would simply be Foreign Office.

182 FCO 77/33, no 71

25 Apr 1968

'Merger and dependent territories': minute by Sir P Gore-Booth of a discussion between Mr Stewart and Mr Thomson

The Commonwealth Secretary and the Foreign Secretary had this afternoon a short preliminary discussion of the problem of the handling of the Dependent Territory questions in the context of the merger. The Commonwealth Secretary said that he had been very much impressed with the inter-dependence in certain of the most important Dependent Territories of internal and external affairs. Indeed the inter-dependence was so complete that he felt that he was coming to the view that there would have to be a separate section of the new Office which would handle Dependent Territories' matters in their entirety.

2. On the other hand he saw dangers in there being a situation in which there would be a 'Dependent Territories' Minister', since this would mean that all points at issue would have to be decided by the 'Super-Secretary of State' in person and this was an impossible demand to make of him. Possibly matters could be arranged that such decisions could be taken at the junior Minister level. For instance, it might be possible to arrange that the junior Minister specialising in Dependent Territories' matters might have a geographical competence which would cover a good proportion of the important Dependent Territories.

3. The Foreign Secretary said that he appreciated the great difficulty of this problem. On the other hand he felt it very important not to go so far in the direction of specialising that the purpose of the merger would be frustrated. In fact the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Office had been seeking to work as a merged Office in these matters already and to create a specialised apparatus within the merged Office might, rather absurdly, end going backwards rather than forwards.

4. The two Ministers agreed that there would have indeed to be a specialised Dependent Territories chain of command in matters concerning administration since any attempt by geographical areas to administer individual Dependent Territories would result in an absurd fragmentation. In regard to the more difficult question of the relation between the geographical and 'functional' aspects of Dependent Territories' questions, the Secretaries of State considered that the question of the level of decision and of reconciliation of points of view required considerable further study and directed that this should be undertaken.

183 FCO 77/32

29 Apr 1968

[Merger of Commonwealth Office and FO]: letter from Sir D Jakeway¹ (Fiji) to Sir M James expressing concern about a 'betrayal' of dependent territories

When Arthur Galsworthy was here last week I asked him how the affairs of the dependent territories were likely to be handled when the Commonwealth Office was merged with the Foreign Office. He told me that no decisions had yet been taken but that there was a body of opinion in the Foreign Office which considered that no

¹ Governor of Fiji, 1964–1968; his letter was signed in his absence by G P Lloyd, the chief secretary.

separate division for dependent territories was necessary and that their interests could be looked after by the division which had responsibility for their particular geographical area i.e. Gibraltar would go with Spain, the Falkland Islands with Latin America, Fiji with Australia, New Zealand and the rest of the South Pacific and so on.

2. I can understand the attractions of an arrangement so tidy and potentially so economical. But I feel I must nevertheless write to tell you of the consternation and alarm with which I view it. For no matter what was intended, my considered judgment is that it would in practice make impossible the continuance of the present special relationship between Britain and her dependent territories. This is, of course, altogether different from the relationship with independent countries, whether Commonwealth or foreign. The primary purpose of diplomatic posts in independent countries is to protect and further British interests. Britain's first responsibility towards the dependent territories is to protect their interests, not hers. This may be an over-simplification of a complex relationship, but in essence it is the truth, and it depends for its preservation on there being in Whitehall a body of officials with special knowledge of the dependent territories, with time to study their problems and with responsibility for representing their interests and promoting their welfare. Less than two years ago that responsibility was discharged by a separate department headed by a separate Secretary of State. There is no longer a Colonial Office, nor a Secretary of State for the Colonies. The diminishing number of dependencies no doubt made that inevitable but the adverse effects on the remainder have been cushioned by the retention in the Commonwealth Office of ministers with special responsibility for them and of departments dealing specifically with them, under the direction of a deputy under-secretary. Thereby, the relationship has been largely maintained. I do not believe it could persist once no officer spent more than a (probably quite small) part of his time on dependent territories. For everyone would then be preoccupied with more important issues and subject to extraneous pressures. And indeed I am bound to say that already there has been a noticeable drawing-away and lack of understanding when our dealings have been with functional departments.

3. If in the merged office there is to be no separate division charged with responsibility for the remaining dependent territories I do not therefore see how Britain can honestly and honourably discharge her obligations towards them. There will be no identifiable voice in Whitehall to speak for them. They will be left to fight their own battles with the British Government. While remaining citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies, they will have all the disadvantages of dependencies and none of the advantages. It will be no less than a betrayal. Britain's responsibilities towards the dependent territories have not changed in nature just because the number has diminished.

4. If the geographical distribution of the dependent territories goes through, not only will the position of a governor be an unenviable one but, in Fiji, the reaction when the significance sinks in will be sharp and bitter, both in the Government and in the community at large. The changes so far made have evoked little public comment (fortunately that third leader in the Times of April 6th was seen by few and I understand from Arthur that it appeared only in the first edition and was incorrect). There is a touching faith that Britain will always stand by Fiji and that how she does it administratively can safely be left to her. But if people find themselves lumped with foreigners in an office which, whatever the name, is organised to deal with foreigners

I foresee a growing sense of abandonment; and the personal assurance given by the Secretary of State in his telegram of the 20th March, and the Prime Minister's statement in House of Commons on the 9th April, will sound hollow indeed. The process of bringing Fiji, in partnership with Britain, to full management of her own affairs will be hindered, not advanced. Distrust, bitterness and suspicion will take the place of loyalty, goodwill and faith.

5. There will be no opportunity for me to get this letter typed before I go on tour so I am asking Peter Lloyd to sign it for me. He agrees throughout with the views I have expressed.

184 FCO 77/32

30 Apr 1968

[Merger of Commonwealth Office and FO]: letter from Sir R Grey¹ (Bahamas) to Sir M James expressing concerns about local staffing arrangements and the proposed merger in London

Together with other officials and with several knowledgeable local politicians both of the Government and of the Opposition, I have been troubled in mind about the recent disappearance from concern with our affairs in London of officers who have knowledge of those affairs, both from at least some months (if not years) of paperwork and also from visits to the Bahamas. I know that the Administrator of the Turks and Caicos Islands (Robin Wainwright) is also troubled in respect of his charge. One officer is moved elsewhere because he has opted to join the Diplomatic Service and is required to serve overseas; another is moved elsewhere because he has *not* opted to join the Diplomatic Service and must therefore go to another Ministry. As you will know, there has been for some years past a restless series of changes in ministerial responsibility for the dependent territories. Now that both the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands are coming to particularly critical stages in their constitutional development, it is unhappy that the civil servants also should change; and some of the more thoughtful inhabitants of both territories have commented very adversely.

2. Being thus troubled in mind, I spoke to Arthur Galsworthy during his recent brief visit and was even more troubled when he told me that there is a school of thought in Whitehall that thinks the public interest would be served, when the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Office merge, by having no sections of the combined Office that are concerned solely with dependent territories. I understand that the 'geographical' (as distinguished from the 'subject') departments of the Office would, if such a view prevailed, concern themselves with dependent and independent countries alike. (The *reductio ad absurdum* of this would, I suggest, be one department that dealt with both Spain and Gibraltar!) This seems to me to be so unreal a view that, even though my own concern with any dependent territory is so soon to cease, I ought to write and set out my arguments against it as a 'customer' of the Office in London.

3. The nature of the concern that Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom has with dependent territories, like the nature of the work that is the

¹ Baron Grey of Naunton (life peer cr 1968); governor of British Guiana, 1959–1964, of the Bahamas, 1964–1968, of the Turks and Caicos Islands, 1965–1968 and of Northern Ireland, 1968–1873.

responsibility of a Governor, is quite different from the nature of such matters in regard to an independent country, whether it be a country of the Commonwealth or a foreign country. So long as Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom retains any responsibility for a dependent territory, there are executive responsibilities to be discharged; an essential element in the functioning of the local apparatus of government is the forming of policy and the carrying of it into execution on behalf of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. There is not only the concern, that exists in respect of an independent country, to obtain information about people and facts and to assess prospects and estimate trends and to give explanations of United Kingdom policies and to seek to influence local policy accordingly; there is also a responsibility for direct action.

4. The Governor of a dependent territory has a three-fold function: he represents The Sovereign; he is the local head of the local government; and he is the representative of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. As local head of the local government he will, in a territory like the Bahamas which has ministerial government, exercise most of his functions on the advice of local Ministers—he will not necessarily be a mere rubber-stamp and he may be able to influence their advice, but he is in the end bound to accept it—but he will also act in respect of some matters in his own discretion. Here, for instance, the Governor is responsible, as the principal executive of the territory, for matters of defence, external affairs, internal security and the police (No Ambassador or High Commissioner has a like function.) In those matters that are within his discretion he must be guided by the policy and wishes of Ministers in the United Kingdom; and in his third capacity, as the local representative of the United Kingdom Government, he must carry out the orders of that Government. He may, if he is unlucky, have to attempt to reconcile such orders with the wishes of the dependent Government of which he is the local head—and that is difficult indeed. The Governor must, therefore, have the help in London of officials knowledgeable about his territory and its people, but knowledgeable also—and able to call on accumulated records of experience—in dealing with that territory and its people as well as with comparable territories at comparable stages of development. A course of action that is sound enough in itself may need to be substantially varied or even avoided entirely among particular people in a particular territory; on the other hand, a solution to a particular problem that has worked in one place may, if it is suggested from accumulated experience in London to a man on the spot who might not otherwise have thought of it, prove to work equally well in very different surroundings. There is a world of difference between diplomacy, even of the most successful kind, and overseas administration at its best. The best practitioners of the one craft will not necessarily be even moderate performers at the other.

5. In several territories in which I have served I have found that local people, even when they were engaged in what was grandiloquently and quite inaccurately called 'the struggle for Freedom', had considerable regard and respect for officials of the old Colonial Office who became known to them over the years. Many of them have, over the years, lamented the too-frequent changes, some of which were necessary and seen to be so and some of which had little apparent justification. Those who influence the thought and action in dependent territories are very unlikely to appreciate a system under which their interests will seem to them to be the concern only of officials in London equally concerned with neighbouring independent countries whose interests are different from or even adverse to their own.

6. All this, I respectfully suggest, is a statement of fact that might come from any experienced Governor; but I venture to claim some additional ground for putting forward my arguments. Over the past four years, I have necessarily had frequent (almost daily) experience of working in concert with successive Ambassadors in Havana. Because our weekly diplomatic charter is the principal link with the outside world for the British and other Embassies, this Office is a sort of Bahamas Agency for Havana. I have been very fortunate in having, in succession, Adam Watson and Dick Slater,² with whom to work and we have managed very agreeably. But this experience has shown me how very different is the task of an Embassy from the task of a Governor's Office and how very differently the respective tasks are approached.

7. It was only to be expected that the setting up of the Diplomatic Service and the bringing-together of systems of communication, etc. and the merger of the Colonial Office with the Commonwealth Office would have created initial difficulties that might in the early stages seem almost to outweigh any advantages. But making allowances for that, it is a fact that in many small ways extra work has been caused here by the lack of understanding of the nature of a Governor's Office and its great difference from a High Commission or an Embassy. This tendency will inevitably increase when the Commonwealth Office is merged in the Foreign Office. We do our best to respond to communications addressed to 'Dear Chancery' and reasonably to interpret circular instructions intended to apply to the greatly more numerous diplomatic posts overseas but quite unsuited to our conditions; but the public interest will *not* be served if the comparatively few Governors are left without backing in London by officials specially experienced in and with access to accumulated experience about dependent territories. The fewer and the smaller the dependent territories, the more difficult each tends to become!

8. With some hesitation I add what I hope is another justification for my writing. I came to the Service late and I came after an upbringing in New Zealand different from that of most entrants to the Foreign Service, the Dominions Office Service and the Colonial Service. I trust I have reached a sensible understanding of English ways after all these years; but I reached it without a previous inheritance of settled beliefs; and I have no doubt that dealing with dependent territories on behalf of the United Kingdom Government requires a continuing expertise that differs from that of the Foreign Office and the Diplomatic Service.

9. If the better view prevails and the work in London related to dependent territories continues to be the responsibility of specialized departments of the new Office, there must be some continuity of service in those departments. Where the responsibility is for the framing and execution of policy, even a brief visit to a territory and some acquaintance with its leading figures makes (as has been shown often in practice) a great difference to the ease and certainty of wise decisions in London; but given the strict control of travel votes that now unhappily prevails, no official in London is likely to acquire much practical knowledge of any territory if he is arbitrarily crammed into a system of two-year postings. We have suffered unduly in the recent past through too few officials having even as long as two years in one job.

10. I am sending a copy of this to Galsworthy (consistently with my belief that separate expertise for dependent territories is the proper thing!).

² Watson and Slater were successive ambassadors at Havana in the 1960s.

185 FCO 49/141, no 7

4 Oct 1968

‘The merger of the Foreign and Commonwealth Offices’: circular letter from Sir A Galsworthy to Commonwealth and dependent territory posts¹

The purpose of this letter, which is being addressed to all Governors, High Commissioners, Administrators and Resident Commissioners, is to tell you about the arrangements that have now been agreed for the merger of the Foreign and Commonwealth Offices. It was prepared by Sir Arthur Galsworthy but, as he is away for a few days, he has asked me to sign it ‘for’ him—which is why my name is mentioned in the third person.

2. You will remember that in his Confidential circular telegram No.5 of the 20 March, 1968, the Secretary of State said that in working out our detailed organisational plans for the merger we would have very much in our minds the particular interests, problems and needs of our Dependent Territories, and our special responsibilities for them. How the affairs of the Dependent Territories were to be handled in the new merged Office was in fact one of the major issues which had to be resolved by the Committee which was set up to do the detailed planning for the new Office.

3. The Committee’s basic approach to the task of merging the two Offices was that something more was wanted than simply sewing together the existing analogous Foreign Office and Commonwealth Office Departments, with as few changes as possible, hoping that over a period they would grow together. Geographical departments in the two Offices were therefore broken down into their components and rebuilt on unified geographical lines, so that each Department would deal comprehensively with both Foreign and Commonwealth countries in a particular geographical region (all the functional departments will of course be entirely joint in this sense).

4. But the Dependent Territories pose rather special problems. While on the one hand many of their problems are inextricably bound up with foreign policy—Gibraltar/Spain, Hong Kong/China, British Honduras/Guatemala—the nature of Ministerial responsibility for them and the work of looking after them and their interests is of a quite different kind from that in the rest of the Office. The solution that has been reached is broadly that the Dependent Territories Division will continue (but under the new name of Dependent Territories Administration Division) to handle the relationship of the territories with Britain, and questions relating to their internal affairs and administration, while their external relations will be handled by the geographical department in whose area they are situated. Of course the departments concerned with the internal and external affairs of the Dependent Territories must react on each other, in view of the close interrelation of these two aspects of our responsibility for the territories; and there will therefore need to be the closest and most intimate cooperation between the departments concerned. They will in fact continue to work together as they have done in the past.

5. I attach a chart² which sets out the shape of the merged Office, when it comes

¹ In Galsworthy’s absence, the letter was signed by J C Morgan (CO from 1947, CRO from 1962, assistant under secretary of state, CRO/Commonwealth Office/FCO, from 1966).

² Not printed.

into being this autumn. You will see that the Dependent Territories Departments fall into two groups: Group K, the Dependent Territories Administration Division, which will continue to be under the supervision of James Morgan at the Assistant Under-Secretary of State level; and the Hong Kong Department in Group C (the Far Eastern Division). The Hong Kong Department will be supervised at the Assistant Under-Secretary of State level by John Moreton, who used to be in the old Colonial Office. I will be the Deputy Under-Secretary of State to whom James Morgan will work, and John Moreton in respect of the Hong Kong Department. The Deputy Under-Secretary of State in charge of the Far Eastern group of departments, and of the external side of Hong Kong, will be Sir John Johnston,³ who also came from the old Colonial Office.

6. You will see also that the merged Office will contain a Commonwealth Coordination Department. This will be the expert source of Commonwealth 'lore', and will contain a special section dealing with Dependent Territories constitutional problems and other matters of Dependent Territories 'lore'. I will be one of the superintending Under-Secretaries responsible for the Commonwealth Coordination Department. The Heads of the various Dependent Territories departments will continue to be Bunny Carter (Hong Kong Department), John Bennett⁴ (Gibraltar and South Atlantic Department), David Jerrom (Pacific and Indian Ocean Department), and Tony Fairclough (West Indian Department, which will also take over responsibility for St. Vincent and Montserrat).

7. I have mentioned above that the present Dependent Territories Division is to be re-named Dependent Territories Administration Division. The new title is intended to indicate the difference in the relationship of HMG as a whole, and therefore of the new merged Office, with Dependent Territories, as compared with that which exists between HMG and independent countries (including other Commonwealth countries); the responsibility of the Secretary of State to Parliament for the Dependent Territories covers of course wider and more detailed functions than his responsibility for relations with independent countries.

8. It will obviously be important, especially in other Commonwealth countries and the Dependent Territories, to reassure people that the change does not in any way mean any loss of interest on our part in the Commonwealth connection or any lessening of our concern for the welfare of the Dependent Territories. If anyone needs reassuring on this point, we hope you will point out that the new arrangements mean that all issues will from the outset be looked at in balance from both the foreign and *Commonwealth* (including Dependent Territories) points of view, rather than from one or the other. There will no longer be the tendency to feel that some problem is the 'other' Office's concern. Moreover, the special provision of a Commonwealth Coordination Department should, as I have said, ensure a repository of Commonwealth lore and see that specifically Commonwealth and Dependent Territories traditions and practices are not forgotten. The existence of the Dependent Territories Administration Division is intended to ensure that we make the best use of the specialised knowledge and experience required for looking after the interests of

³ CO from 1947; CRO from 1957; deputy high commissioner, South Africa, 1959–1961; high commissioner, Sierra Leone, 1961–1963; Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1963, Rhodesia, 1964; assistant under secretary of state, CRO/Commonwealth Office, 1966–1968; deputy under-secretary of state, FCO, 1968–1971; high commissioner, Malaysia, 1971–1974.

⁴ J S Bennett, CO from 1936; head of Gibraltar and South Atlantic Dept, Colonial Office/CRO/Commonwealth Office/FCO, 1965–1971 (see 314).

our Dependent Territories. We expect decisions soon on the Ministerial complement, and will let you know the allocation of Ministerial responsibilities as soon as this is decided.

9. The need for the Dependent Territories departments and their opposite number 'independent' geographical departments to work in the closest collaboration the whole time means that they must all be housed in close proximity to each other. The idea is that all the Dependent Territories departments should, before the end of the year, be housed in what is at present the main Foreign Office building. But this involves a major reshuffle of all the accommodation which will be available to the merged Office; and it is unfortunately not possible to 'hole in one', as it were. In fact, the Dependent Territories departments from the beginning of September onwards, have in succession been transferred to the Matthew Parker Street building for two or three months before the other moves in this complicated game have released the accommodation in which they are to be housed in the main Foreign Office building; our latest indication is that this should happen early in November.

10. As has already been announced the name of the new Office is to be Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the date of merger is to be the 17th of October.

11. The intention is that an announcement will be made in Parliament in the middle of October. A short publication is to be issued at about the same time to explain the background and progress of the merger. It is most important that the information in this letter (except that relating to the name of the merged Office and the date of the merger) should remain *strictly confidential* until the announcement is made. We realise, of course, that there is a good deal of interest in many of the Dependent Territories about how their affairs will be handled in the merged Office, and there is no objection to your passing on the information in this letter prior to the announcement on a strictly confidential basis, to your Ministers or unofficial members of your Executive Council.

186 FCO 49/138, no 91

5 Nov 1968

'Relations with the Commonwealth': FCO departmental circular issued by Sir P Gore-Booth on communication with Commonwealth governments and representatives after the merger

In these notes, prepared with a great deal of help from Morrice James before the merger, I try to identify for the general guidance of the new Office some of the ways in which our dealings with Commonwealth Governments and their representatives in London may have differed from their foreign equivalents.

2. Please take account of these as appropriate. We shall be under a certain amount of scrutiny in these matters in the early months of merger, and it is important that we should carry out the undertaking the Prime Minister gave in the House of Commons on 28 March, when he said:—

'The amalgamation of the two Offices implies no change in our attitude or approach to the Commonwealth connection. In the new Office the responsible Ministers will attach fully as much weight to the views of other Commonwealth Governments as they have always done. In particular, I should like to emphasise that Commonwealth High Commissioners in

London will continue to have ready access to me and to other British Ministers and their Departments in exactly the same way as at present.'

3. Traditionally Commonwealth High Commissioners and their staffs have had easier and readier access to British Ministers and officials than the generality of Ambassadors and their staffs (there are of course exceptions on both sides). They deal direct with a wider range of Government Departments and in general in a more informal manner than do their foreign counterparts. They also, of course, have a special relationship with the Palace, deriving in all cases from their recognition of Her Majesty as Head of the Commonwealth and, in the case of twelve Members, from Her Majesty being separately their own Head of State. For this reason, incidentally, some care should be taken over the use of the abbreviation 'HMG'. With twelve other Governments regarding themselves as Her Majesty's Governments, the formulation 'the British Government' is usually to be preferred in a Commonwealth context.

4. The special access enjoyed by Commonwealth representatives in London is also reflected in the treatment accorded to visiting Commonwealth Heads of State, Ministers and officials who in general have easier and readier access to the Palace, Ministers, and Whitehall Departments than is enjoyed in general by their foreign counterparts. Arrangements have been made to ensure that particular services formerly rendered by the Commonwealth Office in this connection continue in the merged Office. The impression we make initially will therefore depend a good deal on the treatment the FCO accord to High Commissioners and their staffs (and for this purpose the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Arnold Smith, should be regarded as a High Commissioner).

5. The Secretary of State has told High Commissioners that they will have the same right of access to him as they had to the Commonwealth Secretary. They did not abuse this right before merger and there is no reason to assume that they will do so now. It is hoped and expected, however, that they will seek to call on the Secretary of State only on matters of prime importance and that normally they will deal with the Minister or senior official immediately responsible for the matter under consideration. I am sure that you will, whenever possible, meet a request for a call from a High Commissioner or a member of his staff. I also hope that Heads of Departments and desk officers, particularly those with immediate responsibility for relations with individual Commonwealth countries or for subjects of particular concern to other Commonwealth countries, will—where necessary—take an early opportunity of getting to know their colleagues in the High Commissions and assuring them of our continuing interest.

6. Membership of the Commonwealth has made it possible for many of the newer Commonwealth countries to continue a close relationship with the former Imperial power than they otherwise could have in this day and age. To many, the Commonwealth connection may often seem to be one-sided. But communication of any kind is most important in overseas relations, and past experience is that it is possible to have with the responsible Members (and these include both the 'old' Members and some, though not all, of the new) the sort of continuing dialogue we have with the United States and other particularly friendly Governments. As part of this dialogue, we can discuss problems informally with these members at official level before Ministerial decisions have been taken or our line determined on a particular subject. The FCO should continue to aim as widely as possible at consulting at all

practical stages rather than merely informing. Even where there is little reciprocation, this continuing consultation is an effective way of getting our views across to a group of Governments controlling a quarter of the world's land area and population.

8. [sic] There are several useful techniques at our disposal in communicating with Commonwealth Governments. There is in the first place a long tradition of the exchange of personal messages between the Secretary of State and the Minister of External Affairs, and between Prime Ministers. Nice judgement is called for in deciding when to recommend that the Secretary of State or the Prime Minister should send a personal message to his opposite number (or in circular form to all Commonwealth Ministers of External Affairs or Prime Ministers). The objective must be to avoid debasing this currency by over-use, but at the same time not to keep it so much in the vaults that we do not get the best value out of it. Secondly, our High Commissioners in most other Commonwealth countries enjoy a privileged relationship which includes easy access to Ministries other than the External Affairs Ministry. You need not hesitate to suggest that these channels be exploited as occasion arises.

9. We get a great deal of information from 'old' Commonwealth Governments: and the new ones lean on us day by day more than they would like to admit publicly. All give us leads into other organisations—the OAU, the Muslim world, ANZUS and so on, and in this way present an indirect non-military means of maintaining our influence by a kind of political osmosis. Many—in particular India and Pakistan—hold important market possibilities in the middle-distance future. And we have about £2,500 m. of British capital invested in the overseas Commonwealth. For all these reasons we must make our new collective responsibility for the Commonwealth connection an effective one.

10. I attach an annex¹ setting out some of the special arrangements we have with Commonwealth countries, and some of the special services we perform for them. The repository of all information about these and about Commonwealth practices and procedures generally is Commonwealth Co-ordination Department. Please consult with the Department when in any doubt: and please remember to keep the Department in touch (by drop copies of minutes, etc.) with any matters of general Commonwealth significance, or touching on our formal relations with the Commonwealth Secretariat, or with the Australian States, Canadian Provinces, or individual member countries.

¹ Not printed.

187 FCO 59/590, no 1 28 May 1970
'Machinery of government: Ministry of Overseas Development':
minutes of a meeting of senior officials at the Civil Service
Department on the future of the ODM¹

Sir William Armstrong said the object of the meeting was to discuss what advice he should offer to an incoming Prime Minister after the General Election, on the future organisation of the overseas aid function. The formation of a new government of

¹ The discussion was between Sir W Armstrong (permanent secretary, Civil Service Dept, and official head of Home Civil Service), Sir D Greenhill (permanent secretary, FCO), and Sir G Wilson (permanent secretary, ODM).

either party made possible changes in the machinery of government field which were difficult or impossible at other times, even though it might not be the best moment in other respects to consider change. The field was one in which organisational and managerial considerations had to be weighed alongside political ones. Given the admitted objections to an outright merger of the Ministry of Overseas Development with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a possible form of organisation which would accommodate a political decision to unify ultimate ministerial responsibility for foreign affairs generally and for overseas aid, would be to retain the ODM as a separate organisation, with its own accounting officer, and staffed by home civil servants (along with seconded members of the Diplomatic Service), with a Minister designated as Minister for Overseas Development but working with delegated authority from the Foreign Secretary who would have the statutory responsibilities.

2. This assumed a fundamental political decision about the relationship between the aid function and foreign policy generally. It also took account of broader changes in the machinery of government in the direction of fewer but larger departments headed by Ministers in a smaller Cabinet. This process had already gone a considerable way with the Ministry of Defence having absorbed the three service departments, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office itself including three former overseas departments, the Ministry of Technology which had absorbed the Ministry of Power as well as large parts of the former Ministry of Aviation and other departments, and the Department of Health and Social Security which was again the product of a succession of mergers. Further development in the direction of integration might take place in the Ministry of Housing and Local Government/Ministry of Transport field, where the Secretary of State for Local Government and Regional Planning already exercised broad powers of direction. While more compact departments such as the Home Office, the DEP and the DES as well as the Scottish Office and the Welsh Office remained, it was entirely possible that, leaving the ODM on one side, there would be no departments headed by a Minister not in the Cabinet. In that situation, the position of a separate Minister of Overseas Development, unique though his function might be, could present certain difficulties.

3. In discussion the following points were made:—

a. There was general agreement that no acute difficulties had arisen between successive Foreign Secretaries and successive Ministers of Overseas Development, and while the importance of compatibility should not be neglected, it might be thought unlikely that difficulties would arise unless there were an exceptional clash of personalities.

b. It was, however, suggested that in the event of an acute clash, the Foreign Secretary should have the final say given his responsibility for overseas policy generally. He would not however *require* to have the statutory responsibilities in this field of aid for this purpose. The need would be attained by political direction.

c. There were practical advantages in the present position and it was both useful and indeed necessary to the aid function to have its own Minister and its own body of staff whose greater continuity enabled them to build the essential contacts with institutions and Home Departments in Britain which it would be difficult for members of the Diplomatic Service to do on the normal basis of postings.

d. Whatever the theoretical case, if the aid function were being developed from scratch in the context of a single overseas policy department and minister, for combining it in the latter, there would be a considerable political price now to be

paid in terms of any change which could only appear as a downgrading of the aid function, and its subordination to the UK's foreign policy. The argument, that for a separate Minister of Overseas Development to be the only non-Cabinet Minister might have a worse effect than giving it direct representation in the Cabinet through the Foreign Secretary, was more theoretical than real.

e. There was general agreement that in administrative terms the present arrangements were working satisfactorily. To disrupt these would carry a cost to efficiency without the prospect of corresponding gains. There was however the counter argument that a comparatively very small Ministry of Overseas Development in a Whitehall composed largely of big departments, would appear to be unstable and would leave the staff to suffer many of the ill effects of actual disturbance even if this were not immediately contemplated.

4. In further discussion, it was agreed that while the logic of a political decision to make overseas aid part of overseas policy generally would suggest an outright merger of the Ministry of Overseas Development with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, its staff becoming members of the Diplomatic Service, there were powerful arguments against this. The measure of disturbance would be very great; the degree of continuity necessary to the function especially in the essential contacts in the UK would cease to be attainable; and the corpus of experience which could be maintained in a separate organisation would be fragmented.

5. *Sir Geoffrey Wilson* said he thought there was no good case for change on organisational grounds, looking at the question in isolation. There were moreover political disadvantages in terms of reaction to what might appear a downgrading of the aid function, both at home and overseas. On the other hand, there was a policy choice to be made on whether overseas aid should be regarded as part of a broader overseas policy function, there was the consideration of the compatibility of a separate Ministry of Overseas Development given a central government machine made up of very large departments headed by Ministers in a smaller Cabinet, and there was the possible, though not so far actual, possibility of a conflict on an important policy issue between a Foreign Secretary and a Minister of Overseas Development.

6. Summing up, *Sir William Armstrong* said that there was no basis for recommending a change to an incoming Labour Prime Minister given the Labour Party's commitment to the separate organisational expression of the aid function. While there was equally no strong organisational or managerial basis for urging a change on an incoming Conservative Prime Minister, the considerations, bearing on a decision, which had been brought out in discussion would be relevant to any consideration of the political question of the future of aid policy, and he would advise that organisational and managerial considerations did not impose severe limitations on the measure of change discussed. There was general agreement with this view.

188 FCO 59/590, no 9

28 July 1970

[Future of ODM]: Cabinet Office record of meeting between Mr Heath and Mr Wood

The Minister of Overseas Development came to see the Prime Minister at 5.15 p.m. on July 27, 1970 to discuss the future of his Department.

The *Prime Minister* said that there were broadly three possibilities for dealing with the Ministry of Overseas Development: it could stay as it is; it could remain a separate entity, as part of the Home Civil Service, but with the statutory powers and responsibilities of the Minister transferred to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary (so that it would be part of a federal structure under the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary); or it could be completely integrated into the Foreign Office. He thought that in practice the third of these solutions was out of the question because the staff concerned were members of the Home Civil Service and not of the Foreign Service. On the other hand, he did not think it realistic to treat aid as completely divorced from external policy. So far as he knew, no other country had a separate Ministry of Overseas Development, and, though he would not favour tied aid, he would wish to be sure that policy in the field of aid was co-ordinated with and governed by broad considerations of external policy.

The *Minister of Overseas Development* said that he doubted whether we should have had a separate Ministry of Overseas Development if at the time when the Department was set up the responsibility for external policy had not been divided among three departments. But he would be worried about transferring his statutory functions to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary. Inevitably a considerable number of those who now came to see the Minister would want to see the Minister with primary responsibility, and this would add to the burdens on the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

The *Prime Minister* said that the structure of Government was under examination by officials. If the Minister had any further thoughts about the future machinery for dealing with development and aid policy, he would be glad to have them, so that they could be taken into account in the examination.

The *Prime Minister* said that he was looking forward to visiting the United Nations Assembly in October, and would like to talk in his speech about the new Development Decade. He wanted to make a constructive contribution to discussion. In particular, he would like to emphasise that developing countries could do more to help themselves. The Pearson targets¹ could not be achieved without major contributions from private investment, but developing countries were all too apt to follow policies which discouraged private investment. The *Minister* said that Lord Aldington² had ideas in this field which he hoped to bring to the Prime Minister's attention in due course.

Asked whether he thought his Ministry was over-staffed, the Minister of Overseas Development said that while he would not wish to express a final view at this stage, he thought not. Indeed, there could well be justification for having more centres overseas. He accepted, however, that it would be important to review the functions of the economic and educational advisers to the Minister.

¹ On the Pearson targets, see 189, note 2, and 427, note.

² Deputy chairman of Conservative Party, 1959–1963; chairman, Grindlays Bank Ltd, 1964–1976.

189 FC 59/590, no 23
[Future of ODM]: minute by Mr Wood to Mr Heath

14 Aug 1970

Thank you for letting me talk with you last month about the future of the Ministry of Overseas Development.

Having studied the note of that conversation,¹ I think I should tell you that, even under present arrangements, it would be wrong to describe aid as being treated separately from external policy. The size of the programme, and the detailed allocation of the money, are agreed only after discussions between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Treasury, the Board of Trade and ourselves. The present arrangements therefore make certain that aid is governed by broad considerations of external policy. This was in fact written into the terms of reference of my Department when it was created in 1964.

The real point here appears to be a narrow one. If, under the present system, there is an irreconcilable difference of opinion between the Foreign Office and my Department, it can be settled only by Ministers collectively, ultimately by the Cabinet. This possible conflict might be avoided by transferring the statutory powers of the Minister of Overseas Development to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary; it could as easily be avoided by requiring from the Minister of Overseas Development an understanding that any difference of opinion, which might otherwise have had to be resolved by Ministers collectively, would be settled in discussion between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and himself.

This latter suggestion is a course mid-way between your first and second alternatives. I think it would achieve the objective you have in mind, and would also accord with the wishes of the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, with whom I discussed the matter on 5 August. In particular, it would avoid adding to his burden of work.

You asked me for further thoughts about the future machinery for dealing with development and aid policy. One important consideration, which was clearly in your mind and that of the Foreign Secretary, is the need to stimulate and provide the right climate for private investment. I am now considering how private investment could most effectively be encouraged, and co-ordinated with the official programme; for this is essential if we are to achieve the 1% target.² I think it is an additional argument against embedding the Ministry of Overseas Development too deeply in the Foreign Office.

I welcome your intention to make a constructive contribution about the Second Development Decade at the meeting of the United Nations Assembly. While it would be fair to point out that the developing countries must do more for themselves, there is no doubt that the real pressure will be on the developed countries to make some commitment on the 1% target. Nearly all of them will be prepared to do so. With this in view, I discussed our own forward programme with the Chief Secretary earlier this week. He has undertaken to let me have his ideas early in September, and I will then, if I may, report again to you.

Finally, I will certainly examine the possibility of staffing reductions, but I fear the scope is very small. Committed as we are to expanding the aid programme, I think I shall have to make some small increases in staff overseas, which will become essential if increased resources for development are to be properly directed.

¹ See 188.

² At its second conference in Feb 1968, UNCTAD (United Nations Commission for Trade and Development) set an overall target of one per cent of GNP for total aid flows (state aid, private investment and export credits) by 1975.

I am sending a copy of this Minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Lord Privy Seal and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Civil Service Department.³

³An announcement was made on 15 Oct 1970 to the effect that the foreign secretary would assume ultimate responsibility for overseas aid. The change was being made to unify ministerial responsibility for overseas policy, and to create conditions under which the private sector could be engaged to a greater extent than hitherto in the field of aid. The statement acknowledged that the management of overseas aid was a function distinct from the general conduct of foreign affairs. Hence, in the unified department, development work would be in the charge of a separate minister whose status (though not his legal position) would be that of a minister in charge of a separate department not represented in Cabinet. The Overseas Development Administration of the FCO would continue, like the ODM, to be staffed by home civil servants with continuing provision for secondments in both directions with the Diplomatic Service. The assumption of overall responsibility by the foreign secretary was said to reflect the growing importance of aid as a factor in international relations. It did not mean Britain's contribution would be any more based on short-term political considerations than it had been in the past. In most other donor countries the distribution of aid was carried out under the aegis of the Foreign Ministry or Finance Ministry. In the case of the UK, the reason for setting up the Department of Technical Co-operation and later the ODM was the complication caused by the existence of three separate ministries dealing with external affairs and aid matters—the FO, CO, and CRO. That complication had since disappeared following the mergers leading to the creation of the FCO as a unified department (FCO 591/591, no 41). The new arrangements came into being on 12 Nov 1970.

In May 1974, under another Labour government, the ODA resumed its status as a separate ministry under its former title of Ministry of Overseas Development with its own minister. It changed back to the 1970 arrangement in Nov 1979 under a Conservative government. It was again known as the ODA as a functional wing of the FCO. Upon the return of a Labour government in 1997, the ODA was replaced by the Department for International Development under a secretary of state with Cabinet rank.

190 FCO 86/6, no 27

13 Aug 1971

[Overseas Civil Service]: letter from Sir L Monson to Sir W Armstrong

1. For some time we have been concerned about long-term arrangements for the continued provision of expatriate staff to the dependent territories.

2. There remain 17 overseas administrations in most of which for a number of years to come the Secretary of State's responsibility for good government will involve a need to ensure sufficient staffing at the senior levels. In the Western Pacific territories in particular, where the traditional colonial pattern of district administration survives and localisation of posts is in its fairly early stages, a substantial number of posts still have to be filled with expatriate officers. Elsewhere, although the civil services are in most cases manned almost entirely by local people, it is a matter of the highest importance that a small number of administrative posts at the top should continue to be filled by expatriate officers of suitable calibre and experience. Hong Kong is an exception in that the proportion of expatriates to locals in the Civil Service is higher than in general elsewhere than the Western Pacific and a high level of expatriate staffing is likely to remain a permanent feature of the administration for as far ahead as one can see.

3. Recruitment on a career basis to HM Overseas Civil Service ceased some years ago. Apart from a diminishing number of senior career officers who still survive in the top posts, we are now almost entirely dependent on contract appointments of officers with previous OCS experience, though we have been supplementing these with occasional appointments from the Diplomatic Service and secondments from the Home

Civil Service. The supply of officers with Overseas Civil Service backgrounds is with the passage of time however fast drying up, and without a radical new approach we shall before long find it increasingly difficult to meet our needs in the territories.

4. To deal with this problem a team led by L. C. J. Martin, an Under Secretary in the ODA, toured the Western Pacific dependencies earlier this year. In the light of his recommendations we are moving towards the conclusion that the most satisfactory solution lies in the establishment of a small metropolitan-based service for senior officers in the administration services of the dependent territories and possibly some in certain professional fields. This service would be managed as at present by the Dependent Territories Administration Division of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office which already has responsibility in this connection (and which from 1 November will also operate as a Division of the Overseas Development Administration) and we envisage that its terms of service would be broadly comparable with those of the Diplomatic Service. This position could however only be achieved if we could rely more deliberately than hitherto on a regular supply of secondments from the Home Civil Service. The new service should also include a small number of contract officers whom we can only expect to retain or attract if we are able to offer them improved career prospects and conditions of service.

5. The scale of the problem is not large. We are talking of not more than 180 administrative posts in all, the greater part of which we would still hope to be able to fill from sources other than the United Kingdom services. We estimate that the total number of administrative posts which would need to be filled from either the Diplomatic and the Home Civil Service should not exceed 50 or 60 at any one time. However because of early retirements and slowness in localisation in most of the remaining territories, we foresee the need for a fairly rapid build-up to this figure between now and 1975. Thereafter we expect the number to level out and by the early 1980s to have begun to decline. These posts would generally range in grade from HEO to Assistant Secretary. In addition there would probably be a need within the context of the new service for some secondments from Home departments to the professional services in the dependent territories. Precisely how many will need further examination but we hope that the numbers would be quite small.

6. These general ideas on the future staffing of the dependent territories obviously have implications for both the Home Civil Service and the Diplomatic Service. As a first step, Denis Greenhill would welcome an opportunity of discussing them with you and Michael Walker in an attempt to establish whether progress along the lines we have in mind would have your support. As he will be on leave during August perhaps this could be arranged in early September. Meanwhile David Cole and David Scott (who returns from leave on 23 August) are dealing with the matter here and would be at your people's disposal if they would like any amplification of our ideas.

7. A copy of this letter goes to Michael Walker.

191 FCO 86/6, no 39

8 Sept 1971

[Overseas Civil Service]: FCO record of a meeting between Sir W
Armstrong and Sir D Greenhill

The meeting had before it a letter of 13 August from Sir Leslie Monson to Sir William Armstrong about the long term arrangements for continued provision of ex-patriate

staff to the dependent territories.¹ Sir Denis Greenhill said that the problem of finding suitable administrative and professional staff to run the remaining dependent territories was becoming acute. Those who had been doing it in the past were gradually leaving the Service. It was essential that this work should be done well on political, development, and financial grounds and the FCO had come to the conclusion that they would have to recruit a limited number of people on a career basis who would have to be supplemented by staff on loan from the Diplomatic Service and the Home Civil Service. The number of posts involved would probably be well under 100 all told at any one time. He hoped that the CSD would accept that this was an important problem, recognise that the people who had to be recruited for this purpose would not come within the normal Diplomatic Service staff ceiling and agree to an arrangement for regular loans of administrative and certain professional staff from the Home Civil Service to supplement the numbers of those recruited specially for this purpose. If the right people were to be recruited it would be essential to offer them a proper career. This could only be done if the Diplomatic Service and the Home Civil Service agreed to absorb some of them after their service in the dependent territories and he hoped that the CSD would be willing to co-operate in this. Mr Morrison² said that the CSD recognised the importance of the work and of getting the right people for it. The CSD might well be able to help by providing reasonable numbers of people at the HEO-SEO level and perhaps some SEOs on temporary promotion to Principal. It was however likely to be difficult to provide first-class general purpose Principals and Assistant Secretaries for these assignments. The Home Civil Service was facing a period when there would be an increasing number of retirements at this level combined with new work in connection with EEC which would require a number of good quality staff. He doubted whether there would be many volunteers at the more senior levels as the good younger Principals and Assistant Secretaries would be inclined to think that their career prospects might suffer if they took an outside post at what was often a critical period in their career. Nevertheless the CSD were very ready to do all they could to help.

The following points were made in discussion:—

1. If the new service was to be introduced it must be a self-contained and recognisable group.
2. Staff would have to be recruited on a career basis but it might be necessary to make some special arrangements for them to be absorbed in the UK public services after a career in the dependent territories.
3. Home Civil Servants filling posts in the dependent territories were normally lent to the Government of the territory in question from their own departments.
4. The FCO agreed to explore a suggestion from Sir William Armstrong that it might be possible to use people from the Forces eg at the end of a short service commission for this purpose.
5. If there was to be recruitment at the basic grade it was important that the Civil Service Commission should be involved particularly as this would make the question of re-absorption in the Home Service or Diplomatic Service much more straightforward.

¹ See 190.

² N G Morrison of the Civil Service Department.

Sir William Armstrong agreed to a proposal from Sir Denis Greenhill that the FCO should set up a working party to work out practical proposals to deal with the problems of staffing the dependent territories satisfactorily and to recommend what part the Home Civil Service and Diplomatic Service should play in providing staff on loan to supplement a core of career officers. The Working Party should include a CSD representative at Under Secretary level and a representative of the Ministry of Defence.³

³ Further consideration led in Apr 1973 to the announcement of a scheme to establish a small home-based career group within the Diplomatic Service known as the Dependent Territories Administrative Branch. It was financed from the Diplomatic Service Vote and by dependent territory governments (FCO 86/119 & 121). Hong Kong did not participate, partly because senior Hong Kong administrative staff would lose substantially by joining the scheme at any realistic level of grading. But there was also a political consideration. 'Not only must the *esprit de corps* of the Hong Kong administration be preserved; the confidence factor in Hong Kong demands that Chinese who are willing publicly to throw in their lot with the British must not be given the impression that they will eventually be abandoned. Moreover the introduction of the scheme now for Senior Officers would be read politically as a sign that the end of Hong Kong is near. This would be misleading' (FCO 86/114, no 1, minute by A C Stuart, Hong Kong and Indian Ocean Dept, 15 Jan 1973).

CHAPTER 9

Rhodesia

Document numbers 192–243

192 CAB 130/206, MISC 4/2

27 Oct 1964

**‘Unilateral declaration of independence: defence implications’:
memorandum by Mr Healey for Cabinet Miscellaneous Committee on
Rhodesia**

My colleagues will wish to be aware of the practicability of military intervention in Rhodesia and of the effect in the defence field of a unilateral declaration of independence and subsequent action we might take.

Military intervention

2. Unless we were prepared to start a major and perhaps prolonged operation of war, intervention would only be practicable if all the following three conditions were satisfied:—

- a. We were requested to intervene by the Governor.¹
- b. We could rely on the co-operation of the Rhodesian regular forces and there was no risk of opposition from them.
- c. Salisbury airfield was guaranteed to us as a point of entry.

3. Even in such circumstances, there would be a grave risk of clashes with Rhodesians of British origin and this would be a most repugnant task for our forces. Furthermore, it is impossible to foresee how operations might develop and it would of course be politically difficult to withdraw forces once committed.

State of planning

4. Military planning has therefore been limited to a situation where:—

- a. The operation would be at the request of the Governor.
- b. The Governor is assured of the support of the senior Rhodesian service commanders and of the bulk of the Southern Rhodesian regular armed forces.
- c. The reaction of the territorial forces and police is at worst doubtful.
- d. Inter-racial disorders may occur.

5. The task of our troops would be to assist in the maintenance of law and order and to help in running the essential services of the country

6. I should welcome an opportunity to make an oral statement to my colleagues on the operational aspects.

¹ Sir Humphrey Gibbs, governor, 1959–1969.

Other defence considerations

7. A unilateral declaration of independence and the consequent action by the British government might well result in our losing our present overflying and staging facilities in Rhodesia. These have special importance for the reinforcement of the British African territories (formerly High Commission Territories). In such circumstances we could only continue to meet these commitments if we could be certain of alternative facilities in either Zambia, Mozambique or South Africa. In any event we are dependent on overflying South Africa for access to Basutoland.²

² The arguments about the use of military force against Rhodesia are examined in P Murphy, ed, *Central Africa* (BDEEP, forthcoming). As early as 1956 the Colonial Office had considered the possibility of the white leadership of what was then the Central African Federation threatening a 'Boston Tea Party' in order to gain federal independence. Officials accepted the views of Sir A Benson, governor of Northern Rhodesia between 1954–1959, first, that it was inconceivable a British government would ever send British troops 'to fight against British people (white) in Africa', and secondly, that of necessity therefore British aims in Central Africa had to be achieved by political means. D Goldsworthy, ed, *The Conservative government and the end of empire 1951–1957*, part II, 312. A contingency plan—Operation KINGFISHER—was drawn up in 1961. Ostensibly designed to deal with the outbreak of unrest in Northern Rhodesia, in some respects KINGFISHER resembled an invasion plan. It assumed action might be necessary against white settlers, against the wishes of the federal government. The size of the force required appeared uncertain. An original estimate of three battalions was thought inadequate; three brigades might be needed. Should the federal government oppose Britain's reinforcement of Northern Rhodesia, KINGFISHER's success would depend, either on the neutrality of the Royal Rhodesian Air Force (RRAF), or on its destruction. The significance of this precondition took on new meaning when the Federation was dissolved in 1963. In the reallocation of the federal armed forces, the RRAF was handed almost in its entirety to Southern Rhodesia. The attitude of South Africa was an unknown factor but its intervention on the side either of the Federation or of Southern Rhodesia could not be ruled out. KINGFISHER therefore entailed a risk of full-scale war and loss of civilian life. A fresh look at the implications of the plan in 1963 reached the same conclusion: the choice for the British government lay between a peaceful accommodation with the federal government and war. This remained the military assessment. Two further factors were added when, in 1964–1965, separate action against a recalcitrant Southern Rhodesia was considered. First, the British might find themselves involved in a protracted commitment, comparable with that of the French in Algeria. Secondly, considerable doubts were expressed about the impact of any such action on both the loyalty and morale of British troops. The editors are grateful to Philip Murphy for this background.

193 CAB 148/19, OPD(65)10

19 Jan 1965

**'Southern Rhodesia': memorandum by Mr Bottomley for Cabinet
Defence and Oversea Policy Committee on the dilemma facing the
British government**

We remain at loggerheads with the Rhodesian Government. In two highly intemperate messages to the Prime Minister, Mr. Smith has turned down the suggestion of a British Parliamentary Mission on the grounds that it would serve no useful purpose, and that the British Government have agreed that consultations about independence should take place at Government level only. He also declines to come to London for further talks, unless he is given further clarification of our attitude towards African majority rule. He accuses us of 'financial blackmail' and breach of faith in refusing to proceed with aid talks until the air has been cleared by personal discussion with him on the political issues; and he argues that this 'immoral behaviour' makes it impossible for him to continue negotiations with us with any confidence.

2. The Prime Minister has sent an interim reply expressing our disappointment, but reiterating our own determination to find a means of constructive negotiation towards a peaceable solution.

3. The possibility of a unilateral declaration of independence now looms large again. Mr. Smith may be working towards an early general election.¹ Indeed, his recent messages seem to be designed for publication with a view to swaying the emotions of the European electorate, and securing a substantial mandate for a breach with Britain. The Rhodesians may imagine that we are trying to force them into a breach. More likely, they are still hoping that we will provide them with a pretext for a breach.

4. We are in a dilemma. We have two aims: one short-term and one long-term:—

(a) Our short-term aim is to prevent a unilateral declaration. The consequences of such a declaration would not merely be disastrous for Rhodesia but would precipitate a grave crisis for us throughout Africa and in the United Nations. All indications are that African Commonwealth Governments would not in that event regard limited economic action as a sufficient response on our part and that they would press us to send troops. As we are not prepared to intervene militarily, we are liable to be widely held to be condoning a white Rhodesian rebellion. Moreover, it now looks as though a rebellion would be followed by economic war between Rhodesia and Zambia, when it would become virtually impossible to keep the copper industry in Zambia in production. The effect of a stoppage of Zambian supplies of copper on British industry might materially increase our domestic economic difficulties.

(b) Our long-term aim is to secure conditions under which independence can be granted on a basis acceptable to all sections of the population. If we appear to be retreating from this position, we run the risk of alienating African opinion in Rhodesia itself, the rest of the Commonwealth and the United Nations. On the other hand if we give the white Rhodesians the impression that we are determined to push ahead too far and too fast we shall certainly defeat our own short-term objective of preventing a unilateral declaration. Thus our problem is to break through the political impasse without triggering off the explosion.

5. Although Mr. Smith has hitherto resisted all our attempts to get him to come to London, it is possible that, in the event of the death of Sir Winston Churchill, he may wish to be here for the funeral. There would then be an opportunity to have private discussions with him, with the object of removing some of his suspicions and misconceptions about our attitude, and of exploring ways in which constructive negotiations might be launched. If, as is possible, other Commonwealth Prime Ministers were in London too, one or two of them, including in particular Sir Robert Menzies, might be able and willing to exercise useful influence upon Mr. Smith. It might also be possible, in our talks with him, to indicate our willingness to resume discussions at official level on aid if the political prospects looked brighter.

6. I think we should concentrate on this possibility in the first instance. I am having prepared a note on the tactics we might follow with Mr. Smith if he comes, including a rebuttal of the charges against us in his recent messages, and a general statement of our broad approach to the Rhodesian problem.

¹ The elections were not held until May 1965. Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front secured a sweeping victory, winning all 50 of the 'A' roll seats reserved for Europeans (only 28 seats were actually contested), while of the remaining 15 seats on the 'B' roll, elected by a few thousand African voters, 10 went to the opposition Rhodesia Party and 5 to independents.

194 CAB 148/19, OPD(65)23 27 Jan 1965
**'Zambian copper': report for Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy
 Committee by a committee of officials (chairman, Sir B Trend) on the
 implications for the UK and Zambia of an interruption in Zambian
 copper production** [Extract]

At the meeting of the Defence and Oversea Policy Committee on the 21st January (O.P.D.(65)3rd Meeting, Conclusion 4), officials were instructed to prepare a study of the implications for Zambia and the United Kingdom if the copper mines in Zambia were put out of action, and of any practical steps which might be taken to keep them in production in the event of Rhodesia taking economic measures against Zambia.

2. Separate reports are attached on the implications for Zambia (Annex I)¹ and for the United Kingdom (Annex II). These can be summarised as follows:—

(a) The harm that Southern Rhodesia and Zambia can do to each other is immense; but Southern Rhodesia has the whip-hand and the deterrents are not sufficiently strong to guarantee that she will not take economic measures against Zambia, especially if provoked.

(b) Serious interruption of copper production would lead to economic disaster in Zambia.

(c) Southern Rhodesia's capacity to interrupt production is great and very probably decisive on three fronts: electricity, coal and transport.

(d) There are no adequate alternatives to replace the power, coal and transport facilities which Rhodesia could deny; there is some possibility (which is being examined) that the alternative route through Lobito might mitigate the effects of a denial of Rhodesian transport facilities, but the development of this route would take time and the help afforded would probably be marginal. Moreover, any relief that might be devised would no doubt have to be directed to the maintenance of essential services (e.g. light, hospitals) rather than to the copperbelt.

(e) For reasons of logistics and expense, an airlift solution is not regarded as practicable.

(f) Zambia copper accounts for $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total British supplies of copper and about $\frac{1}{2}$ of our total imports.

(g) Other major consumers of Zambia copper are West Germany, Japan, France and Italy.

(h) Copper is a basic material in the British economy and enters in small but essential amounts in a large number of manufactures.

(i) The possibilities of immediate substitution of copper by other materials are limited, although long term prospects are good.

(j) Release of American stocks is unlikely. There is no economic possibility of creating a British stockpile in the immediate future and legislation would be needed to do so.

(k) An international sharing agreement is unlikely. Some form of control of end use of copper in Britain would be unavoidable but would need legislation. The economic consequences for the British economy would be very serious.

¹ Annexes not printed.

3. If despite our efforts, there is a unilateral declaration of independence, we should have to consider our course of action in the light of three major considerations:—

- (i) If we take strong economic measures against Rhodesia, and particularly if we stop buying Rhodesian tobacco, the rebel government will be more likely to hit back at us through Zambia.
- (ii) Any military action against Rhodesian measures designed to halt copper production would involve full military intervention in Rhodesia and a major operation of war; even then it might not be effective in time.
- (iii) If, on the other hand, we do not react to a Rhodesian declaration by taking effective economic or military action, we shall be in serious political difficulties in Africa, with the Commonwealth countries and in the United Nations.

4. The following recommendations are made in the light of these studies:—

- (a) The immense harm Rhodesia could do to the Zambian and United Kingdom economies, particularly over copper, is one of the compelling reasons why we must avoid provoking a unilateral declaration of independence by Rhodesia.
- (b) We must continue to do everything possible to dissuade Zambia from reacting to a unilateral declaration by instituting measures against Rhodesia which might provoke the latter to retaliate against the copperbelt, and we should take the opportunity of Mr. Kapwepwe's² presence in London over the coming weekend to talk to him with this objective.
- (c) We should prepare a confidential contingency plan for meeting a situation in which we are deprived of Zambian copper. The preparation of such a plan would probably involve consultation with industry and with certain nationalised boards, and perhaps with some friendly governments.

² Zambian foreign minister.

195 PREM 13/534, ff 86–95

30 Jan 1965

[Rhodesia]: record by D J Mitchell¹ of a meeting between Mr Wilson and Mr Smith

The Prime Minister opened the discussion by asking Mr. Smith how he saw things. *Mr. Smith* replied that he saw nothing bright on the horizon from the point of view of negotiations between the two Governments. The Rhodesian Government saw the problems of H.M.G. but there could be no change in their own position, and he would get short shrift when he got home if he were to agree to any. Equally the status quo did not help because it would not produce a return of confidence in the future of Rhodesia. *The Prime Minister* replied that the situation was the same, in reverse, for H.M.G. Certainly the status quo was unsatisfactory. He stressed that there was no difference between the attitude of the Government and that of the Opposition and asked what Mr. Smith saw as the next step. *Mr. Smith* replied that the issue was one of life or death, so that he was bound to take a tough line. It seemed to him that he might get more reason out of the Opposition than out of the

¹ Principal private secretary to Wilson, 1964–1966. Smith was in London for Sir W Churchill's funeral. This meeting with Wilson lasted for ninety minutes.

Government. He would wait for an opportunity and then use it. He was quite clear that negotiations would take us no further and that it was a matter simply of waiting for the moment. Meanwhile Rhodesia had virtual independence, and this provided a shield behind which they would consolidate their position. They would seek to operate the two-thirds majority procedure in order to be able to live within the constitution, although not in accordance with its spirit. They would hope in this way to prolong as much as possible the period within which it would be possible to build themselves up without departing from constitutional methods. Studies were being carried on with this in view and it seemed likely that it would be possible on this basis to last for 60 or 70 years, or perhaps even longer.

2. Asked by the *Prime Minister* what he meant by awaiting an opportunity and whether this meant waiting for some provocative act on the part of H.M.G., *Mr. Smith* said that it did. Asked what he meant by living within the constitution but stretching it, *Mr. Smith* said this involved a number of little things and that it would clearly be bad tactics for him to say precisely what.

3. The *Prime Minister* next referred to *Mr. Smith's* message of January 25 about relations with neighbouring countries and doubted whether *Mr. Smith's* Government had the necessary constitutional powers to enter into defence pacts with other countries in Southern Africa. *Mr. Smith* said that the legal position was not clear cut, but he thought that there would be opinions in support of the view that such pacts would be constitutional. The *Prime Minister* asked what discussions had taken place with President Kaunda about the alleged connivance of the Government of Zambia in subversive operations directed against Rhodesia. *Mr. Smith* replied that personal contact with President Kaunda was not very acceptable. He indicated that it was in any case unnecessary to discuss what were, so far as his Government was concerned, known facts. Before independence legal training in sabotage activities had been going on in camps in Tanganyika; and now, with the knowledge of President Kaunda, a camp had been set up outside Lusaka. The *Prime Minister* said that it ought to be easy enough to verify these activities by direct confrontation or by arranging for an agreed third party to have a look at what was going on. If the allegations were proved, then they would have to be stopped. If not, the Rhodesian Government should look again at the evidence in their possession. H.M.G. certainly could not look at a proposal for a defence pact unless the facts had been verified; and in any case it would amount to an assertion by Rhodesia of an authority as regards external relations which she did not possess.

4. The *Prime Minister* then asked *Mr. Smith* which were the other countries in Southern Africa that he had in mind. Were they South Africa and Portugal? And, if Portugal was one of them, was this metropolitan Portugal or the Portuguese territories in Africa? *Mr. Smith* said that South Africa and Portugal were in mind and that, although he had not yet approached either Government, he assumed that any negotiations would take place with the metropolitan government, since the colonial territories were under orders from Portugal. The *Prime Minister* reminded *Mr. Smith* that Portugal was one of our allies in NATO. He said that H.M.G. would look into all this and get in touch with *Mr. Smith* through our High Commissioner in Salisbury. We were most anxious to cordon off any provocative action aimed at the Government of Rhodesia.

5. The *Prime Minister* then raised the subject of financial aid for Rhodesia and said that we were prepared to enter into discussions. We were not taking the line that

these should be suspended because there had been talk of a unilateral declaration of independence (as was evidenced by our action in relation to the Commonwealth sugar agreement); but, of course, the signing of a cheque must depend on the state of relations between the two Governments at the time.

6. The *Prime Minister* asked what was the urgency about a unilateral declaration of independence. *Mr. Smith* replied that, the longer the delay, the more the economy suffered; in particular, immigration was being slowed down. The *Prime Minister* said that this brought us back to first base; for how could it be established that the majority of the people of Rhodesia wanted independence within the present constitution? When *Mr. Smith* said that the main difficulty was that the majority were too inarticulate to express a view, the *Prime Minister* said that it was difficult to explain to Parliament that, while other countries in Africa had moved to independence, yet in Rhodesia alone the native population were too inarticulate and too backward to express a view. Did this mean that Africans were more backward in Rhodesia than elsewhere in Africa or that the other independent countries should not have become independent? *Mr. Smith* replied that Rhodesia was in a different category. He was not prepared to see it go the same way as Kenya. The Rhodesian Government were not prepared to lower their standards. The *Prime Minister* asked whether any test of African opinion was possible; and *Mr. Smith* replied that the indaba² had been adequate for this purpose. When the *Prime Minister* pointed out that the last General Election in the United Kingdom might have turned out differently if it had been conducted on the basis of an indaba of Lords Lieutenant, *Mr. Smith* replied that Britain had an advanced democracy, whereas the independent African states were all tending towards one-party government and were moving to Communism. The *Prime Minister* then asked whether more African participation would be possible within the existing constitution. *Mr. Smith* replied that none was possible, since this would be regarded as a sign of weakness by the African political leaders. In reply to a question from the Prime Minister, *Mr. Smith* said that Mr. Nkomo was under restriction but not in gaol. He was not a convicted prisoner, whereas Mr. Sithole was. Mr. Sithole was likely to be released in April.³ *Mr. Smith* was not sure exactly how many Africans were under restriction, and Mr. Campbell⁴ gave the figure of about 1,600.

7. The *Prime Minister* then turned to the proposal that the Commonwealth Secretary should visit Rhodesia and asked whom he would be allowed to see. *Mr. Smith* said that he could not see anyone who was in prison; but he would be able to meet Mr. Nkomo, any of Mr. Sithole's supporters not in gaol and any moderate Africans. He doubted, however, whether it would be in the interests of the moderate Africans for the Commonwealth Secretary to see Mr. Nkomo and his supporters. Asked why the moderate Africans did not make more use of possibilities of advance

² Indaba: in this context, a conference or council of African chiefs.

³ Joshua Nkomo, president of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Rev Ndabaningi Sithole, leader of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). Formed as a breakaway group from ZAPU in Aug 1963, ZANU was the more militant of the two African nationalist parties, both on tactics and leadership. There was little between the two on ideology. Both were committed to majority African rule, to African socialism and to pan-African unity. Nkomo and Sithole had been arrested during a government clampdown on African nationalist activity in 1964. They were released from prison—Nkomo in Nov 1964, Sithole in May 1965—but detained in a restriction area.

⁴ E R Campbell, high commissioner for Southern Rhodesia in London, Jan 1964—June 1965.

within the constitution, *Mr. Smith* replied that they were intimidated by the African leaders.

8. The *Prime Minister* then said that, before proposing the all-Party mission that had been rejected by Mr. Smith, he had thought in terms of a mission representing Commonwealth countries. He assumed that this would have been even less acceptable to Mr. Smith. *Mr. Smith* agreed. The *Prime Minister* then went on that it had just occurred to him that another possibility would be that the Commonwealth Secretary should be accompanied by another member of the Cabinet, for example the Lord Chancellor. Would a mission of that character be free to meet anyone not in gaol? *Mr. Smith* replied that there would be no difficulty about this under Rhodesian law; but his Government's attitude would be that it was not in the interests of race harmony or constitutional advance for a mission from H.M.G. to meet people who were in restriction. Such a mission could not lead to progress.

9. The *Prime Minister* asked what would lead to progress, and *Mr. Smith* indicated that independence was the only thing that would. The *Prime Minister* suggested that, given the restrictive attitude of the Rhodesian Government to political activities by Africans, the result was likely to be a one-party state. *Mr. Smith* said that this was not the case, since the 15 B Roll seats were virtually African seats. But he said that the policy of his Government was to encourage a return to the tribal system. He agreed that this implied a three-party system consisting of Government supporters, a European Opposition and tribal leaders.

10. *Sir Burke Trend* asked Mr. Smith what he had meant by his references earlier in the meeting to awaiting an opportunity and meanwhile working within the letter, if not the spirit, of the existing constitution. *Mr. Smith* replied that the idea would be to amend the constitution by use of a two-thirds majority and to live within that constitution, as amended progressively, for a further 50 to 60 years, but 'stretching' its interpretation in practice as far as possible. The *Prime Minister* asked whether the policy of educational advancement would go on. *Mr. Smith* replied that it would. The *Prime Minister* asked whether this would nevertheless be on the understanding that no black majority would emerge. *Mr. Smith* replied that his object would be to ensure that European civilization lasted as long as possible. He confirmed that, meanwhile, his Government would be looking for an opportunity or an occasion for independence. The *Prime Minister* reminded him that the legal, constitutional and economic consequences of a unilateral declaration of independence had been made clear.⁵ *Mr. Smith* replied that Rhodesia, with its balanced economy, could survive and even fight back by retaliatory action in relation to Zambia and British trade and

⁵ In a statement issued on 28 Oct 1964 the Labour government warned that an illegal declaration of independence would be 'an open act of defiance and rebellion', and it would be 'reasonable to take steps to give effect to it'. No Commonwealth government would recognise a unilateral declaration and there would be no prospect of Southern Rhodesia becoming a member of the Commonwealth. The British government would be bound to sever relations, with the result that Southern Rhodesians would cease to be British subjects. With one or two exceptions, foreign governments would likewise refuse to recognise Southern Rhodesia's independence. Economically, all financial and trade relations between Britain and Southern Rhodesia would be jeopardised. UK aid or access to the London money market would be out of the question, and 'most serious consequences' would be involved for anyone in the UK affording aid, financial or otherwise, to the illegal government. An illegal declaration would inflict upon Southern Rhodesia 'disastrous economic damage', and leave the country 'isolated and virtually friendless in a largely hostile continent'. Elaine Windrich, *The Rhodesian problem: a documentary record 1923-1973* (London, 1975) pp 208-209.

industry. He added that the indications were that statements by other Governments supporting the British indication of the consequences of a unilateral declaration of independence had been made with some reluctance. He went on that this was a matter in which his life and those of his supporters were at stake, one in which they had no option but either to accept some degree of economic hardship or get out.

11. The *Prime Minister* said that it was clear from the discussion that the views of the two Governments were almost irreconcilable. He, for his part, would consider the new idea of a small Governmental mission; meanwhile, if Mr. Smith had any other ideas, he hoped that they would be made known to H.M.G. *Mr. Campbell* then suggested to Mr. Smith that there was a risk that the Prime Minister might be left under some illusion about the extent to which the Government of Rhodesia would accept such a mission. *Mr. Smith* said that there would be no enthusiasm for it; but a mission composed of two Ministers would be more acceptable than any of those proposed earlier. It had to be recognised, however, that if it returned to London with a view unfavourable to his (Mr. Smith's) line, the position would only be worsened. The *Prime Minister* said at this point that he supposed that a referendum was ruled out. *Mr. Smith* said that it was impossible to ask people to express a view on something they did not understand; but he in turn would like to know whether a referendum which produced a 51 per cent vote in favour of the existing constitution would be accepted by H.M.G. The *Prime Minister* replied that this would depend on whether a proper sounding of opinion had taken place. *Mr. Campbell* asked whether 'window-dressing' would be acceptable, in the sense that some of those voting in favour of independence on the basis of the present constitution might not understand what they were voting about. The *Prime Minister* replied that it depended what was in store behind the shop. For example, would the question be directed only to the present constitution; or would the voters be asked whether they favoured independence on the basis of some different constitution? *Mr. Smith* asked whether a result produced by the ordinary 'brain-washing' methods used by politicians would be acceptable. The *Prime Minister* said that 'brain-washing' might be involved in elections; but in those in which he had taken part there had been more than one party engaged in the process. There was then a further brief discussion of the constitution of the proposed mission, in which *Mr. Smith* said that he would prefer a Governmental mission to one which included representatives of other Parliamentary Parties.

12. Finally, the *Prime Minister* said that he appreciated that Mr. Smith had wished to enter No. 10 by the back door in order to avoid unnecessary publicity. He would no doubt wish to leave by the same way, but Mr. Smith would understand that it would not be possible to conceal from the press that their meeting had taken place. He proposed that it should be said simply that Mr. Smith had paid a courtesy call. *Mr. Smith* agreed.

13. The meeting ended at 4.40 p.m.⁶

⁶ Bottomley and Lord Gardiner, the lord chancellor, visited Rhodesia from 21 Feb to 3 Mar 1965. They held talks with African chiefs and headmen all of whom claimed, in a series of stage-managed speeches, that they and not the nationalists represented African opinion. Meetings were also held with nationalist representatives from ZAPU and ZANU. The British ministers regretted the failure of the nationalists to exploit the opportunities open to them under the 1961 constitution, condemned the recent acts of violence and intimidation, and claimed that the UK had never in any colony put into power persons who had not served a political apprenticeship or worked a transitional constitution. Further talks took place

with various representatives of European opinion, the majority of whom were said to be apprehensive and opposed to further African advancement unless the nationalists returned to constitutional methods. Finally, talks were held with the Rhodesian government at which, on day one, Smith 'came out of his corner fighting' and was completely uncompromising in his exposition of his government's position. Broadly the Bottomley-Gardiner visit was designed to combat moves towards UDI, to re-establish a dialogue with the Rhodesian government, to correct false ideas about the position of the British government, and to assess the state of Rhodesian opinion as a whole. J B Johnston, the UK high commissioner in Salisbury, believed some measure of success had been achieved. But he was equally clear that on the fundamental issue, the gulf between the absolute demands put forward by the nationalists on the one hand, and anything negotiable on them with the rest of the country on the other, was too great to be bridged (FO 371/181877, no 112, Johnston to Bottomley, 12 Mar 1965).

196 FO 371/181877, no 141

12 May 1965

'Implications of economic pressure against Rhodesia': paper by the Commercial Relations and Export Department of the Board of Trade

Ministers have instructed officials to plan on the assumption that, in the event of a unilateral declaration of independence by Rhodesia, the Ottawa Agreement would be suspended; Southern Rhodesia would be excluded from the Commonwealth Preference Area, and a ban would be imposed on imports of Rhodesian tobacco into Britain. This paper considers the likely effects of such action on the Rhodesian and British economies.

Effects on the Rhodesian economy

2. A ban on imports of Rhodesian tobacco into Britain would affect some 17½ per cent of Rhodesia's exports. The effects would be severe, but could not be relied upon to bring down a rebellious government. Some of the frustrated tobacco exports could be disposed of at some price, and the farmers could switch to other crops, such as beef which are in good world demand. The precise effects would depend on timing. The selling season for tobacco began last month, and will continue until the autumn, with a decline from about August. The Rhodesian financial position will be at its annual peak in the late summer, and a ban on tobacco announced then would give the farmers the best chance to plant alternative crops, lay off labour etc. A ban announced later in the year, or early next would have a more serious and immediate effect because the farmers would have less time to plant new crops, would have committed capital to tobacco, and would have run up overdrafts.

3. If other countries which supported our attitude to Rhodesian u.d.i. also joined in a tobacco ban, the effects would be more severe. Tobacco accounted for 33% of Rhodesia's total exports last year. It would, however, be unwise to assume that even all sympathetic countries would go so far as to put an embargo on a source of good and cheap tobacco, the price of which will be even more attractive as a result of our ban.

4. There is in any case, little logic in stopping short at a ban on tobacco. Such a ban, affecting two-thirds of Rhodesia's exports to us, would be a substantial trade embargo, and would probably cause no less a degree of retaliation by the Rhodesians than would a full embargo. Such a full embargo would affect some 25 per cent of Rhodesia's exports. If other sympathetic countries cooperated, the results would be more severe, but once again, it is difficult to see what cooperation we would get. The resulting pressure could still not be relied on to end a rebellion.

5. The big problem is what will happen to trade relations between Rhodesia and Zambia. If they calculate that a tobacco embargo, or even a full import embargo by Britain will not ruin the economy, the Rhodesians might decide to ride out the storm of British displeasure and to maintain correct relations with Zambia. They are however likely to react to British action by cutting off the copper flow and thereby causing an economic war with Zambia. President Kaunda will in any case find it difficult to restrain his hotheads from initiating economic warfare, and might feel obliged to respond to any provocation such as the repatriation of Zambian workers from Rhodesia. Zambia takes 26% of Rhodesia's exports and is particularly important to Rhodesian secondary industry, much of which grew up in the Federal period and would be uneconomic without the Zambian market. Zambia desperately needs some of the goods she imports from Rhodesia, and because there would be no alternative sources if transport were disrupted there would be a great incentive to smuggling. Nevertheless, a breach of relations would reduce Rhodesian exports by about a quarter and there would be little chance for Rhodesia to dispose of the relatively high-cost consumer goods she exports to Zambia, or to switch to new products.

6. A ban by Britain on imports of Rhodesian tobacco coupled with a total embargo by Zambia on Rhodesian goods would reduce Rhodesia's exports by 43 per cent. Industry would be very seriously depressed, and agriculture would be badly hit; investment from abroad would be discouraged. There can, however, be no certainty that, even if other countries also joined the ban, the rebellion would end.

The interdiction of Rhodesia's imports would be extremely difficult and would demand the co-operation of all industrialized countries; Britain alone could only inconvenience Rhodesia. The cutting of the railway links with the coast would demand the co-operation of Portugal, while the cutting of the railway link with South Africa through Bechuanaland would leave a good direct road link. Any attempt to prevent Portugal and South Africa from supplying Rhodesia would involve a full blockade of Southern Africa, and would still be ineffective because the blockade could not be efficient and South Africa could in any case supply Rhodesia's vital needs from her normal imports.

The effects on the British economy

The assessment of the effect on the United Kingdom economy of an embargo on Rhodesian tobacco depends on the assessment of whether the Rhodesians would, or would not, strike back by withholding power and the use of the railways, from Zambia.

If the Rhodesians took no major counter-measures, the effects, on the United Kingdom would be:—

- (i) Higher-cost tobacco from the United States—about £6 m. additional per annum; but with possibly reduced consumption and tax revenues.
- (ii) Loss of a good deal of our exports to Rhodesia—at present £35 m. per annum.
- (iii) Loss of invisible earnings on Rhodesia's debt held in the United Kingdom (between £50 m. and £70 m.) because of Rhodesia's inability to service debts; and on United Kingdom investments in Rhodesia (about £50 m.). This leaves out of account the possibility of repudiation, etc.
- (iv) In addition, we should be at risk for about £38 m. of Rhodesian debt to I.B.R.D., (for loans of which H.M.G. is guarantor), to C.D.C. and to H.M.G.

Thus, assuming the minimum likely response by the Rhodesian government to an embargo by the United Kingdom on their tobacco exports, the U.K. balance of payments would show an annual net deterioration of about £50 m.

If the Rhodesians took counter-measures which led to the interruption of supplies of copper to the United Kingdom, we should be at even greater risk on (ii), and (iii) and (iv) above; in addition, there would be the Zambian share of the I.B.R.D. loan for the railways and the I.B.R.D. and C.D.C. loans for Kariba (an additional £25 m.) since the Zambian economy too would be ruined. The ruin of the Zambian economy would further reduce our exports by the £12 m. a year sent to that territory and would eliminate dividend payments from the Zambian copper and other companies—a net annual loss of say, £20 m. on current account. But the possible damage to the United Kingdom would not end here. It is clear that the loss of up to 40 per cent of the United Kingdom's copper requirements would lead quickly to a shortage of a material vital to important sectors of the British economy, with a consequent slowing up in industrial production and in construction, and a fall in exports; along with increased costs to industry through higher prices for the limited free supplies of copper available, and for its ultimate substitutes. There is no alternative source of copper—not even the United States stockpile to which there would be other claimants, and which in any case contains very little of the type of copper of which we should be desperately short.

The loss of Zambian copper would in itself probably cause a deterioration of between £75 million and £125 million to our balance of payments through a higher import price of copper and copper substitutes, direct loss of exports (because of lack of copper for export goods) and indirect loss of exports through a slowing down of our industrial activity generally. Over the longer term exports would also suffer from the slowing down of capital investment which would also be inevitable.

The annual balance of payments costs to us of action by Rhodesia in retaliation against an embargo on their tobacco would, therefore, vary between the likely minimum of £50 million and a possible £200 million. Even the former figure would be serious, while if it were the latter it would create a grave sterling crisis, necessitate an immediate re-thinking of our world wide commitments, and require a substantial downward revision of the economic growth target.

We consider that we ought to assume that an embargo on tobacco will lead the Rhodesians to strike back through Zambia. On the other hand merely to exclude Rhodesia from the Commonwealth Preference Area, which would mainly mean the loss of Commonwealth Preference for Rhodesian tobacco, might not have that effect.

Conclusions

i. An embargo on Rhodesian tobacco has no advantage over a full embargo on imports from Rhodesia.

ii. An embargo on Rhodesian tobacco or even a full trade embargo cannot be relied upon to end a rebellion.

iii. Direct sanction by Britain against Rhodesian trade would risk Rhodesian action against our copper supplies, and an effect on our balance of payments that would endanger sterling.

iv. If Ministers decide on direct sanctions against Rhodesian trade, the best hope of success would be in obtaining cooperation from as many other countries as possible. Both objections of principle and obvious trade advantages will militate against their full cooperation.

197 FO 371/181877, no 151

June 1965

'Possible action by the United Kingdom in the event of a Rhodesian unilateral declaration of independence': memorandum by Rhodesian Sub-Committee of the Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee. *Minutes* by R J M Wilson¹ and Sir R Allen (FO)

In drawing up plans for action in the event of a u.d.i. by the present Rhodesian Government, officials have reached the stage where further planning will not be possible without guidance from Ministers on the ultimate objective of any British action.

2. H.M.G. have already warned the Rhodesian electorate that a declaration of independence would be an open act of defiance and rebellion and that it would be treasonable to take steps to give effect to it. Ministers may now wish to consider the various courses of action which are open to them in the light of what they have said, in the light of their objectives and in the light of the economic and political consequences of the various courses of action open to us, which are set out below.

3. There are five conceivable courses of action ranging from a decision to do nothing to the use of force to end the rebellion. These are:—

- (a) Doing nothing;
- (b) taking limited political action;
- (c) applying limited economic and political pressure;
- (d) taking strong economic steps;
- (e) using British troops.

(a) *Doing nothing.* To do nothing, apart from repeating the warnings already given, and to allow the Rhodesians to take their independence illegally while taking no serious steps to bring them under control beyond expressions of disapproval would involve massive political and probably substantial economic damage to the United Kingdom. Such a policy would be in direct contradiction of the warning statements issued by the British Government on 27 October 1964 and by the Prime Minister in Parliament on 29 April 1965, would make our position in the United Nations very difficult indeed, and we would be regarded by the majority of member states as condoning the establishment of an independent white minority government, and as having brought the United Kingdom into line with South Africa and Portugal as a supporter of white supremacy in opposition to nearly every other country in the world. The damage to the Commonwealth would be very severe and it is possible that some African members might withdraw from it. The Organisation of African Unity would probably encourage action against United Kingdom interests, and damage to our commercial, shipping and civil aviation interests might be considerable. Our political position in the Middle East and Asia might suffer substantial damage.

(b) *Taking limited political action (e.g. simply proposing the expulsion of Rhodesia from the Commonwealth and declaring Rhodesians aliens).* This course would require H.M.G. to propose the expulsion of Rhodesia from the Commonwealth following a u.d.i., to declare all Rhodesians aliens so long as the rebellion continues and to sever all relations with Rhodesia but to do nothing more. The first and

¹ First secretary, FO; counsellor and head of Chancery, Cape Town/Pretoria, 1965–1968; head of FO/FCO West Africa Dept from 1968.

greatest objection to this policy would be that it would be admission of defeat, a formal recognition of the success of a u.d.i. and an abdication of responsibility. The second objection to such a policy is that it is in direct contradiction of all our past statements in the United Nations about our responsibility for ensuring the orderly progress of Rhodesia towards independence and that it would be a confession of economic as well as political weakness, which would be regarded in many parts of the world as a condonation of the rebellion.

(c) *Applying limited economic and political pressure.* This course is for the United Kingdom to take limited economic action against Rhodesia, such as the withdrawal of Commonwealth preferences and the denial of access to the London market. For presentational purposes economic action of any kind would have to be accompanied by a dramatic declaration involving political action. Taking into account H.M.G.'s warning statement of 27 October, an announcement would be necessary that Rhodesia by her illegal declaration had temporarily ceased to have the benefits of membership of the Commonwealth and her citizens had forfeited their rights to the privileges of British subjects and would be treated on terms with aliens until they returned to their allegiance to the Crown. Such limited economic and political action, which would do us less damage than (a) and (b), would demonstrate British disapproval of a u.d.i. and might mitigate the political damage which would be suffered if we were to do nothing at all. But it is so unlikely to bring about the end of the rebellion that most of the world would regard us still as condoning the rebellion. It would in no way be consistent with our public statements both here and at the United Nations. It would still make our position at the United Nations untenable. We could therefore expect a measure of political and economic damage, though the likelihood of catastrophic damage is much less than would follow from the action suggested in (b) above. This course of action would not bring down the rebel government, and we would still be subjected to the severest pressure internationally.

(d) *Strong economic action.* The consequences for the United Kingdom of strong economic action against Rhodesia for the U.K. are set out in the paper at Annex.² The conclusion is that severe economic measures (e.g. a ban on purchases of Rhodesian tobacco) could have serious effects on the British balance of payments and, in the event of an escalation of the economic warfare leading to an interruption of our copper supply, would be likely to have disastrous effects, leading to devaluation, the dislocation of British industry, a total loss of confidence in sterling and the frustration of all H.M.G.'s present economic plans.

This course would amount to economic sanctions against Rhodesia and its adoption would increase pressure on the United Kingdom to agree to economic sanctions against South Africa, a course which Ministers have separately concluded would be disastrous for the United Kingdom. Moreover it would tend to drive Rhodesia into the arms of South Africa and it is conceivable that the result might be to force Rhodesia to become the fifth province of the South African Republic. There are therefore grave objections to this course, which could lead to a situation where a balance of payments loss to the U.K. of over £200 million per annum was possible without achieving the overthrow of a rebel Rhodesian Government for which it was presumably designed. It would moreover not satisfy the majority of our critics.

(e) *Use of British troops.* The use of British troops unilaterally following a

² See 196.

Rhodesian u.d.i. has been ruled out by Ministers on the strong advice of the Chiefs of Staff, for overriding political and military reasons and it not therefore a possible option. For this reason planning has been proceeding so far on the assumption that economic measures alone should be used to try to bring down a rebel government. The United States Government has been informed that the use of British troops has been ruled out. Separate consideration is being given to the action we might need to take in a situation where Rhodesia was taking severe economic action against a fellow member of the Commonwealth, i.e. Zambia, and Zambia had appealed to the U.S. to intervene. This would create a different situation, since it would be much more difficult in such circumstances to object to the contention that there was a threat to or breach of the international peace and consequently a Chapter VII situation under the Charter entitling the Security Council to take measures to deal with it.³ The courses open to us in such a situation will be considered in a separate paper now being prepared, which will be submitted to Ministers in due course.

Minutes on 197

The OPD(O) Sub-Committee on Rhodesia, which for several months past been considering the steps which Her Majesty's Government might need to take in the event of a U.D.I., has tended to get bogged down in detail and in the meantime Ministers appear to have been harbouring some illusions about the extent to which we would have freedom of choice if Rhodesia did decide to go it alone, and to be making some unreal assumptions. They have for example asked the Sub-Committee to consider the possibilities for rescuing Zambia 'regardless of cost,' and to plan on the basis that we will decide to take severe economic measures against Rhodesia, the likely consequences of which they have not so far considered.

2. We in the Foreign Office have been concerned about this and have argued that the fundamental issues should be put before Ministers quickly so that they can know what really is involved in the various alternative courses and can clear their minds about our objectives if there should be a U.D.I. This has now at last been agreed to by the Sub-Committee and we have accordingly produced the attached draft paper in consultation with the C.R.O. and the Board of Trade.

3. You will see that what this amounts to is that:—

- (a) The political consequences if we do nothing would be very serious;
- (b) The economic consequences of applying tough economic measures might well be disastrous for us (this is the strong view of the economic departments in Whitehall);
- (c) The use of troops has been ruled out.

4. Logically the obvious course would be to use troops, but the Prime Minister has decided, after receiving secret advice from the Chiefs of Staff, that this option is not open to us. We have not seen the Chiefs of Staff's advice which is highly secret but I understand that the main reasons against using troops are:—

- (i) that public opinion here would not stand for it;
- (ii) that it is not absolutely certain that British forces would agree to fight white Rhodesians (the R.A.F. in particular has quite a number of senior officers who are Rhodesians);

³ Chapter 7 of the UN Charter deals with action to be taken when there are threats to or breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression.

(iii) the forces which we have available which could be used in Rhodesia might not be enough to subdue the tough and determined Rhodesians.

The possible use of troops if Rhodesia takes action against Zambia, Zambia appeals to the United Nations, and the United Nations decides that a Chapter VII situation exists is being considered in a separate paper now being prepared.

5. The attached paper will be considered next by the Sub-Committee, and subject to their views it is proposed that it should go on to OPD(O) and thence to OPD. As yet it contains no recommendations about policy and this we shall have to consider further, but you may like to see it at this stage. We should like to know whether you approve the general lines of the paper, and whether you have any thoughts about the recommendations we should seek to get put forward to Ministers.

R.J.M.W.
9.6.65

I think that this paper is all right as far as it goes, but it leaves a number of questions unanswered. In the first place, it does not, as you point out, attempt to define our objectives. It seems to me that these may broadly fall under two heads:—

- (i) to bring about the collapse of the Rhodesian Government (query: do we really want this and if so what would replace it?);
- (ii) to satisfy, so far as possible, public opinion here, in Africa and in the United Nations.

2. It seems to me unlikely that we shall achieve the first of these objectives, or indeed for that matter the second, by any means short of war; and war is ruled out. In fact the choice of means is, for practical purposes, limited to courses (c) and (d) in paragraph 3 of the paper. Although it may be pretty unlikely that even course (d) would succeed in toppling the Rhodesian Government, this would have to be demonstrated, and it is here that several further questions are raised.

3. For instance, what do we reckon are the chances of South Africa accepting Rhodesia as a fifth province? South Africa might not welcome the addition of a considerable black population ruled by white oligarchy and with blacks proportionately much greater than in South Africa itself. On the other hand, Smith would be foolish if he went to extremes without first clearing his lines with South Africa. Thus if the chances are that South Africa would, in the last resort, accept Rhodesia, then the likelihood of our being able to topple the Rhodesian Government is much diminished.

4. Again, what are the chances that Rhodesia would really go for Zambian copper? I think that Smith has recently given some sort of assurances to Zambia, for what these may be worth. If Zambia could be induced to refrain from provocative action against Rhodesia, it is just possible that Smith might hesitate to incur the odium of a relatively gratuitous interference with the Zambian copper belt simply in order to hit at British industry. Supposing on the other hand that he did interfere with the copper production, what are the chances of our getting dollar assistance from the United States to buy copper from the Western hemisphere?

5. These are some of the questions to which I think I should want to know the answer if I were a Minister responsible for policy in the event of a U.D.I. I realise naturally that it is not easy to give definite answers to questions of this kind, but I think I should nevertheless want the best advice available on the subject. I think also

that the sooner a paper can be fed into Ministers the better, since the question of Rhodesia may well be the dominant one at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' meeting. It may well be impossible for our Ministers to give any definite indication of policy in the event of a U.D.I. during this meeting, but at least it is desirable that they should not commit themselves before they have considered the circumstances.

R.A.
10.6.65

This paper was discussed in the Rhodesia Sub-Committee on 10 June and as a result is being fairly radically recast on lines which were agreed then. As the C.R.O. wish to put it to Ministers before the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' meeting there will be no time for it to go through OPD(O) and it will therefore be circulated tonight under cover of a minute from the Commonwealth Secretary. It will concentrate primarily on setting out the balance between the serious political difficulties we would encounter if we took very limited action and the economic difficulties we would run into if we took tough action, and will be designed primarily to inform Ministers of the full implications of either set of circumstances.

2. With regard to points raised by Sir Roger Allen, the answers, I think, are as follows:

Our objectives

3. I think that the true position is that our ostensible objective in the event of a u.d.i. would be to bring about the collapse of the Smith Government and its replacement by one loyal to this country, but our real objective would be to do what is necessary in the light of what we have said publicly to satisfy public opinion in the United Kingdom, Africa and the U.N. without running ourselves into bankruptcy. It is, I think, correct that the practical choice is between (c) and (d) in the paper.

Rhodesia and South Africa

4. I do not myself think that the chances of South Africa accepting Rhodesia as a fifth province are very great, though they cannot be ruled out. Not only would South Africa be reluctant to accept responsibility for the four million Africans in Rhodesia or to gamble on the obstinacy of a quarter of a million English settlers, but they would be reluctant also to provoke a crisis in their relations with us, given their much greater interest in avoiding sanctions or other coercive action. They would probably be prepared to accept the white Rhodesians as immigrants in South Africa, particularly as embittered white settlers from former British territories are among the strongest supporters of Dr. Verwoerd⁴ in South Africa.

Rhodesia and Zambian copper

5. Following the visit to Washington which we paid last month this is being dealt with in minutes which the Commonwealth Secretary and the President of the Board of Trade will shortly be sending to the Prime Minister with copies to other members of OPD. It is not very likely that Rhodesia would take economic action against Zambia without provocation. What is possible is that after a u.d.i. Kaunda would come under overwhelming pressure from the O.A.U. to take economic action against Rhodesia and that this would provoke retaliation. I am sure that Kaunda does not

⁴ H F Verwoerd, prime minister of South Africa, 1958–1966 (assassinated).

want to take provocative action against Rhodesia but he might be compelled to eventually by pressure from other Africans.

6. The last question in paragraph 4 of Sir Roger Allen's minute will be answered by the President of the Board of Trade's minute. The chances are not good, but the Board of Trade are continuing discussions with the Americans through H.M. Embassy in Washington.

R.J.M.W.
14.6.65

198 PREM 13/538, ff 94–99

14 Aug 1965

[Rhodesia]: letter from President Nyerere to Mr Wilson expressing reservations about UK policy and intentions

Once again I am writing to you on the subject of Rhodesia, hoping that through a frank correspondence we can better understand each other's attitude, and thus perhaps avoid an unnecessary weakening of the forces for peace and justice.

My problem is that although I fully realise the Rhodesian problem is a difficult one, I feel that it should be possible for Africa to help the British Government in certain important respects. Yet we in Tanzania feel unable to cooperate with Britain as we would wish to do, as your objectives in this matter are not clear to us. Recent newspaper reports, combined with this lack of clarity about your aims, are in fact causing us a great deal of anxiety. A few years ago I would have said it was inconceivable that a British Government would ever again give independence to an African territory on the basis of minority rule. I regret to say that unfortunately this now appears to us as a frightening possibility.

As we both know, my fears in this matter were not shared by our colleagues at the end of the last Commonwealth Conference. The other leaders appeared to be reassured by the time the discussion about the communiqué came to an end. But I am certain that their failure to join me in what I felt to be a very distasteful duty—of disassociating myself from the Rhodesian paragraphs of the communiqué—was the result of their conviction that this principle of independence only on the basis of majority rule had been accepted, and that although the British Government was not willing to spell this out it would not let them down. As you realise, I myself was unable to feel convinced that your Government was committed in this fashion; recent events appear to me to support my greater scepticism.

Believe me Mr. Wilson, there is nothing I want more than to be proved wrong. I am well aware that the Rhodesian problem is a complex one, and that there is no simple or quick answer. I do not expect you to be able to produce an immediate solution. But it seems to me to be infinitely less important when the Rhodesian question is solved, than it is that the solution should be based on the right principles. It is absurd to imagine that a majority Government, based on one man one vote of the whole Rhodesian population could be achieved this year. Such a thing is clearly out of the question. Any hope of a peaceful solution must include a recognition that progress to majority rule is going to be gradual, with hard bargaining at every stage. Two opposing intransigent groups have to be dealt with, neither of them anxious for the compromise which is necessary if there is to be a way forward.

It is for this reason that I have never raised the question of timing—either before, during, or since the Conference. I have not myself talked in terms of one man one vote as the necessary condition for advance in Rhodesia, or even for independence. I do not even demand that the next step should bring an African majority in Parliament. I would, for example, be quite willing to see a 'blocking third' of African members in the Southern Rhodesian Legislative Assembly as the next move, provided only that two conditions were fulfilled. These are, firstly, that the 'blocking third' should consist of representatives of the people and not of indirect servants of the Government; and secondly, that the achievement of this 'blocking third' does not involve the surrender by Britain of her constitutional power over Rhodesia.

These conditions are crucial, and it is on the second one that I am becoming increasingly concerned. According to the British Information Services report of the Commonwealth Secretary's statement to the House of Commons on 30th July, Mr. Bottomley again refused to confirm that there would be no major constitutional change without the full consent of the majority of the people in Rhodesia. He said instead, 'We will not transfer power to Rhodesia except on a basis acceptable to the people as a whole.' On the surface these two things might appear to be the same, but we are all politicians, and we know that wording of this kind is insisted upon only for a purpose. If it were your determination to insist on majority rule before independence I do not understand how these circumlocutions should be necessary.

Again, in answer to another question the Commonwealth Secretary is reported to have said that the considerations which guide the British Government are 'to provide guarantees that future constitutional development should conform with the principle of unimpeded progress towards majority rule, together with immediate improvement in the political status of the African population. . . .' Why would these considerations be necessary if independence with majority rule is the objective? Unless of course, these are the considerations only of the next move forward, which does not include any change in the status of Rhodesia vis-à-vis Britain?

There can surely be no further doubt in the world but that it is impossible to lay down conditions under which an independent government will govern. It is quite impossible to establish safeguards for the people as against their government. It is possible only to hand over sovereignty to local Authority; after that the only question which remains is whether that local government is based on the will of the people or not.

Britain undoubtedly disagrees with many things which the new nations of Africa have done, but she does not, I think, challenge the fact that the Governments of African countries which have become independent since 1945 do represent the wishes and the aspirations of the majority of their peoples. They are based on the majority will. If in these circumstances 'safeguards' have proved illusory, why is there any reason to believe that future constitutional development in an independent country can be made to 'conform with the principle of unimpeded progress to majority rule'? Who or what is to make the minority government of an independent country conform to this principle? And where has such a thing happened? Was not some such principle implicit in the South African constitution in 1910? And what has happened there since, to make anyone believe that a racial minority government

will willingly extend the franchise so that it loses power to a democratic government—especially when another racial group would then be in a majority?

You may well answer that in dealing with this difficult Rhodesian question Britain is confronted not only with the demands of Mr. Smith and his supporters, but also by an Africa which is pressing for immediate action, and by a divided nationalist movement which says it refuses to cooperate on the basis of anything short of immediate majority rule with one man one vote franchise.

In so far as Tanzania is concerned let me again assure you that the timing of the progress is infinitely less important than the direction and the objective. I am very willing to assist you in holding the position with regard to timing when the principle is accepted. I believe that this would be equally true of my colleagues in Africa, all of whom are practical men used to facing the problems of effective power.

As regards the divided nationalist movement, I can only say that independent Africa has some influence which it would be willing and able to use. But again, this cannot be done until the principle of independence only on the basis of majority rule is accepted. If—but only if—the final objective were clear we could help to buy time, and help to obtain compromises for the interim steps.

Mr. Wilson, I am writing once again frankly, and without diplomatic niceties; I am writing as one friend to another about whom he has heard allegations of such a nature that they cannot be dismissed out of hand however much one would like to do so. I am writing, in other words, hoping against hope that you will be able to show me that I am wrong, and that not even this latest evidence carries the implications which I fear. I am anxious to believe this.

When I wrote to you on the question of the Portuguese colonies you replied that you sympathised with our principle, but that you were powerless to take any action. In this case no one has more power than Britain. It is Britain more than anyone else who decides whether another South Africa is to be created in Rhodesia. If action to prevent this needs the assistance of Tanzania I can assure you that this action has only to be asked for. But our country cannot agree, under any circumstances, to connive at the establishment of conditions under which a second South African situation is remotely possible. The transfer of power to a minority government would not make it possible; it would make it certain.

It is the uncertainty of your intentions in this connection that lies behind the present disagreement between Tanzania and Britain on this burning issue. I very much hope it is a disagreement only because of a misunderstanding on our part, but I do not think we can be blamed for our present fears. Nor do I think that, in the light of them, I would be fulfilling my duty to our friendship if I did not state our position quite clearly. We would regard independence for Rhodesia on anything else than majority rule as being a betrayal of all the principles for which our two countries claim to stand. On the timing we are willing to help; on the principle we cannot compromise at all under any circumstances.

Mr. Wilson, I hope that in the midst of all your other important preoccupations you will realise how much this issue matters to the future of Africa and Africa's relations with Britain; and I hope that you will write as frankly in reply. I can assure you that I shall not be concerned about any frankness in criticism of ourselves, but only the assurance you are able to give me.

And in closing, let me send my personal good wishes to you, and express the hope that you have had a refreshing holiday.

199 FO 371/181878, no 180

2 Sept 1965

'Southern Rhodesia': minute by Lord Walston urging more positive action

Southern Rhodesia is of course no direct concern of the Foreign Office. On the other hand our standing in black Africa is; so also is Communist infiltration in Africa. Since these three subjects are inevitably intertwined it would not be out of place to put on paper some thoughts on Southern Rhodesia.

The present Government came to power with considerable mistrust among the European population in Southern Rhodesia and a great deal of good will throughout the whole of black Africa. This good will was immediately reinforced by our action over arms to South Africa. It was only right that we should do all in our power to assure Ian Smith that Socialists were not the devil incarnate, and to try to postpone any hasty action on U.D.I. This we succeeded in doing.

Since then the picture has changed. Although we are far from being loved by Ian Smith and his friends we are not regarded by them as being significantly different from the Conservative Government: we might even be a slight improvement on some of them. On the other hand black Africa has been to some extent disillusioned. We co-operated with the Belgians and the Americans over Stanleyville; we have been softer with South Africa than they had hoped, which gave support to the view that blood, even Socialist blood, is thicker than water and even Socialist whites will stick to their fellow whites in times of crisis: we have not been as tough to South Africa as black Africa hoped (and we may well have to show ourselves even less tough in the not too distant future in the United Nations); and we have refused to take the tough line with Southern Rhodesia that was hoped for. Doubts have even arisen as to whether we will stick by the undertaking not to give independence before majority rule has been assured.

It seems increasingly probable that, unless we give independence to Southern Rhodesia on terms which are at variance with those we had previously stated there will, in the next six months or thereabouts, be a U.D.I. When this comes we shall once again disappoint black Africa by refusing to take the military action many of them will demand; and we shall further disappoint many of them by appearing to drag our feet over economic sanctions. We shall therefore finish up not only by having lost Southern Rhodesia from the Commonwealth (perhaps no very great loss); by having alienated a good deal of white opinion in Southern Africa and also at home by having to put up with the economic consequences to ourselves that have always been inherent in a U.D.I.; but also with the loss of a considerable amount of the already diminished good will in black Africa with which we started a year ago.

This being so, I suggest it would be to our political advantage in Africa, not to mention being consistent with the moral attitudes we have already taken, that we should now take more positive action as regards Southern Rhodesia, even though this may well lead Ian Smith to a U.D.I. There is an outside chance that such action might in fact call his bluff, and he would come to heel, though personally I think this is highly improbable. More likely it would precipitate U.D.I. which in any case would come about fairly soon. But it would precipitate it in such a way that we would gain credit in black Africa for having taken a firm line in defence of the rights of Africanism, without incurring any additional disadvantages we would have suffered had we taken no such action.

Just what this action should be requires careful thought. What I have in mind is in the first place a categorical statement reiterating our determination not to give independence until majority rule is assured; then a statement that the present uncertainty had gone on long enough and was not in the interests of Southern Rhodesia or her neighbours; and thirdly a summons to Ian Smith to attend a constitutional conference in London, and to enable representatives of African opinion to be present also.

So long as there were any reasonable hope that an arrangement acceptable to Ian Smith and satisfactory to ourselves and moderate black African opinion could be achieved, it would be wrong for us to follow such a course. But unless the situation in Southern Rhodesia changes drastically as a result of the proposed visit of the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, there can be little hope left in the minds of realists that Ian Smith will accept anything which could be honourably accepted by us, let alone black Africa.¹

¹ Asked to respond on behalf of the CRO, Cledwyn Hughes argued that since taking office in Oct 1964 the government had pursued two courses: to warn of the consequences of UDI and to continue to negotiate with the Smith government. 'These negotiations are still continuing and, whilst it seems clear that Mr. Smith and his Government will not make concessions that we could regard as acceptable, it would be a mistake to break them off arbitrarily and to take the action which Harry Walston suggests in the penultimate paragraph of his minute'. (Walston commented here: 'Why?') Cledwyn Hughes continued that if and when Smith declared a UDI, it would be important to demonstrate to the world how Britain had been prepared to talk reasonably; the crisis was not therefore of the UK's making. Also, in view of the UK's vulnerability to the economic consequences of a UDI, it was not in the UK's interests to precipitate such a declaration: 'On the contrary we should play it long and cool.' He acknowledged such a policy would continue to draw criticism from 'Tanzania *et al*' because they suspected the UK proposed to grant independence short of majority rule, and because they thought the process had become too drawn out. Their suspicions had been heightened because of the inevitable confidentiality surrounding the negotiations. This, according to Cledwyn Hughes, 'cannot be helped and we will have to live with it for some little time again' (minute, 8 Sept 1965). Walston was not persuaded by the argument about Britain demonstrating to the rest of the world that it had behaved reasonably: this might satisfy the uncommitted countries but it would do nothing to improve the UK's image with the Afro-Asian countries. If, as suggested, the UK could do nothing on its own to avoid a UDI, it would be important to show 'to the deeply committed Afro-Asians' that the break had come 'as a result of our unswerving support for African aspirations' (minute, 10 Sept 1965). On Stanleyville (para 3 of Walston's minute) see 376, note 4.

200 CAB 148/22, OPD(65)136 **5 Oct 1965**
'The constitutional position after a UDI': memorandum by Mr Bottomley for Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee. Annex: Possible replacement of the Smith government after UDI

During our discussion on the 2nd October of our aims after a u.d.i. (O.P.D. (65) 42nd Meeting Item 1) we took the view that in those circumstances the United Kingdom Government would constitutionally assume full responsibility for Government in Southern Rhodesia.

2. This question has now been further investigated and C.R.O. Legal Advisers have been consulted. A paper setting out the constitutional position and some of the policy considerations which arise is annexed.
3. I think I am right in saying that during our discussions we assumed that the

full powers of the Southern Rhodesian Government would revert to the United Kingdom Government as an automatic consequence of the rebellion. It will be seen that this is not the case (except to the extent that Her Majesty's residual general executive authority would be exercisable on the advice of Her United Kingdom Ministers). Although the British Government will retain its present ultimate authority and responsibility for Southern Rhodesia as a British dependency, if it wished to appoint itself as the Government of Southern Rhodesia in place of the existing Government, it would have to take powers to do so. Those powers would be available to us under the terms of the General Enabling Bill.

4. The question whether the British Government should appoint itself as the Government of Southern Rhodesia is a difficult one. The pros and cons are set out in paragraphs 12 and 13 of the annex. To my mind the arguments are evenly balanced. Against taking this step the main argument is that we make ourselves ridiculous by purporting to govern Southern Rhodesia when in fact we shall not be able to do so. On the other hand, I think there is some force to the argument that if we do not exercise the powers, Africans may argue that there is a vacuum of lawful authority and that therefore there is need for it to be filled by a Government and that a Government in exile can fill it. This may strengthen the demand for recognition that we are likely to have to face from a Government in exile.

(Perhaps it might be best for a sub-committee of O.P.D. with legal membership to look further into this problem and make recommendations.)

Annex to 200

When U.D.I. takes place, the Ministers of the Rhodesian Government will be dismissed from office by Her Majesty whose pleasure in this matter would be conveyed either by the Governor or by the Secretary of State. The resultant position in law, if nothing further were done, would be as follows.

(a) *Legislature*

2. The legislature would remain in existence and theoretically capable of functioning without the existence of a Ministerial Government though financial measures could not lawfully be introduced if there were no Ministers. But, apart from the Governor's withholding assent to Bills, there would be no way in which he or the United Kingdom Government could control the activities of the legislature.

(b) *Executive*

3. In so far as particular aspects of the executive authority of Southern Rhodesia had not been vested in any particular person or authority by the Constitution or local law, it would remain vested in Her Majesty on the advice of her United Kingdom Ministers. Thus, United Kingdom Ministers would, in Her Majesty's name, be able to formulate general policy for the government of Southern Rhodesia and to give lawful instructions to Rhodesian civil servants. More to the point, this general executive authority would, as the constitution now stands, also be exercisable by the Governor who, since he would have no Ministers, would be absolved from having to consult them and to act in accordance with their advice. This would also apply to his exercise of powers which were expressly vested in him by law. But where statute had vested an

executive power in some authority other than the Governor we would have no control over its exercise and where, as would frequently be the case, a power was vested by statute in a Minister (e.g. a power to give directions, grant licences, appoint members of boards, etc.) there would be nobody who could lawfully exercise it.

(c) *Judicature, etc.*

4. In general, other institutions of the Government of Rhodesia could continue to function lawfully except in so far as the intervention of a Minister was necessary, e.g. in the appointment of a new or an acting Chief Justice.

5. In practice, a government that was split, in the way described above, between (i) wholly 'rebel-dominated' institutions such as the Legislative Assembly, (ii) neutral or doubtful elements such as the civil service or statutory bodies and (iii) 'U.K. dominated' institutions such as the Governor or U.K. Ministers could not operate. In particular, the present Governor will not be able effectively to exercise any of his existing powers or any other powers that we might vest in him.

6. The possibility of setting up an alternative government should therefore be considered. There might be some advantage in deliberately refraining from doing so in order (a) to avoid committing ourselves until we saw how events turned out and (b) to create the maximum confusion and thus weaken the Smith government's hold on the country. Against this however the substitution of an alternative Government would have the following advantages: (a) we would thus be seen to be acting positively rather than merely acquiescing in the rebellion; (b) such a Government might act as a focus for opposition to the illegal regime; (c) it would also help us to deal with claims for recognition of a *government in exile*. It seems likely that African nationalists from Rhodesia now living outside that country will after u.d.i. proclaim themselves to be a 'Government in exile'. There may be more than one such set of claimants. They are likely to seek international recognition and probably to secure it from many Afro-Asian countries. They may also apply for admission to the United Nations. We might be able to resist such claims more effectively if we could assert that we are ourselves the lawful Government of Rhodesia following u.d.i.

7. Under the powers which would be conferred on us by the General Enabling Bill we would have virtually unlimited discretion as to the form which an alternative Government might take. But there seem to be three major possibilities.

(a) *New Governor*

8. We could appoint somebody else to be Governor (e.g. Tredgold or Todd)¹ and we could then transfer all legislative and executive powers to him. We could, if necessary, authorise him to exercise these powers from outside Southern Rhodesia. But while a person so appointed might serve as a rallying point for loyal opposition in Southern Rhodesia and might be more willing to act in that capacity than the present Governor, he could not provide effective government and, if he remained in Southern Rhodesia, he would probably be arrested and prevented from acting at all.

(b) *An African Government*

9. We might confer on some African group the authority to act as the Government, e.g. the United People's Party (U.P.P., the official opposition) or some

¹ See 201, note 3 (Todd), and 242, note 1 (Tredgold).

group of African Nationalist politicians. A serious disadvantage of this step would be the effect on moderate European opinion opposed to the unconstitutional regime; they would probably feel that since the U.K. Government had thrown in its lot finally with the Africans there was no hope for their future in a Rhodesia bound to Britain and would almost certainly give all their support finally to the rebels. However, it is not to be supposed that any such African Government could operate effectively, except perhaps by way of underground activities amongst the African population, and not only could we not exercise any control over what they purported to do but we might also be saddled with moral responsibility for any excesses against the European population committed by them or at their instigation.

(c) *U.K. resumption of government*

10. We could transfer all legislative and executive powers to authorities of the U.K. Government. For example we could vest the legislative power in Her Majesty in Council or in some authority designated by Her Majesty in Council and we could vest all executive authority (including all powers that are at present vested by law in Ministers) in the Secretary of State or in some other authority designated by him or by Order in Council.

11. Course (c) above—resumption of Government by the United Kingdom—seems to be the most promising of the three and its advantages and disadvantages are discussed more fully below.

Advantages of U.K. resumption of government

12. These may be summarised as follows:—

(a) It would demonstrate to the world that we were doing what we could to combat the rebellion. It could be presented as analogous to our recent suspension of the Aden Constitution.²

(b) It would enable us to operate in other countries in the name of the Southern Rhodesian Government and thus, without our having to stand on our position as metropolitan power, to secure whatever results we wanted in connection with Southern Rhodesian affairs in those countries. Thus we could withdraw the Rhodesian Government representatives in Lisbon and Pretoria and the Portuguese and South African Governments could scarcely continue to receive those representatives unless they were willing to recognise the authority of the rebel Government in preference to the lawful authority which we had substituted. In the same way we could also establish a lawful claim to Southern Rhodesian Government property in other countries, including Rhodesia House in London.

(c) By setting up a manifestly lawful Government in place of the rebel Government we might prevent the splintering of the opposition to it which would result if several African parties all took the field.

(d) The rapid displacement of the Smith government by another government would serve to underline the fact that the acts of the Smith government and its supporters were unauthorised and illegal acts. This might help to prevent the United Kingdom Government being fixed with responsibility in international law for damage which these acts caused to other countries, e.g. Zambia.

² See 44.

(e) Persons in Rhodesia (e.g. the judges) who wished to obey the lawful Government of the country might, if we set up another Government in place of Mr. Smith's, be more disposed to withhold their obedience from the Smith government than if there were no rival in the field. The pull of, say, an African Government in exile or an underground African Nationalist Government would not be so strong as the pull of a Government whose acts were the acts of British Ministers and Her Majesty's Privy Council.

Disadvantages of United Kingdom resumption of government

13. But there are the following disadvantages:—

(a) It might be interpreted by even moderate European opinion in Rhodesia as, in effect, depriving the country of self-government and might thus consolidate European opinion in support of the rebels.

(b) It would very soon be clear to all that we were not in fact able to enforce any orders or laws made under the powers we had assumed and the United Kingdom Government might thus be humiliated both in the eyes of Rhodesians and in the eyes of the rest of the world and its authority would thereby be reduced.

(c) We must not exclude the possibility that we might at some future date be forced to recognise that U.D.I. had succeeded; in those circumstances it might be less difficult for us to pull out with good grace and to recognise the regime as the lawful government of Rhodesia if we had not in the meantime put ourselves in a position where, under our own law, the lawful government consisted in effect of United Kingdom Government Ministers and their direct agents. Not only would our withdrawal in these circumstances be more humiliating but Afro-Asian opinion might be more inclined to interpret it as a voluntary 'hand over' of power.

201 PREM 13/542, ff 91–93

22 Oct 1965

'Visit to Rhodesia: October 1965': minute by J O Wright¹

The problem of Rhodesia is basically the problem of Notting Hill, Smethwick and Little Rock;² how people of different standards of living and different ways of life, their differences accentuated by the differences of their skin colour, can live together in harmony.

Rhodesia represents, in microcosm, the dilemma of the future which faces mankind in general; how can the rich white world co-exist with the poor non-white world. It is the tragedy of our times. But Rhodesia has to act out its problem in the glare of world publicity, day by day, round the clock, with all the world as merely hostile spectators shouting unhelpful advice. It is an appalling problem, perhaps too big for a small country to handle. Things started to go wrong in Rhodesia when in 1958 the mainly

¹ This minute was written in preparation for the prime minister's visit to Rhodesia, see 202.

² Notting Hill refers to the incident in 1959 when a West Indian was murdered in Notting Hill, a district in West London. Smethwick refers to the ramifications of Patrick Gordon Walker's defeat in his West Midlands constituency of Smethwick at the Oct 1964 general election. Little Rock, Arkansas refers to the ugly scenes captured on television at Little Rock High School in 1957 when white students and adults protested about the admission of nine black students. The local police sympathised with the protestors and President Eisenhower was forced to send in over 1,000 paratroopers to restore law and order. The Arkansas National Guard was federalised and put under Washington's command.

white electorate threw out Garfield Todd³ because his platform was too liberal. Successive Rhodesian governments, Whitehead⁴ Field,⁵ Smith, have been progressively more extremist. The African nationalists bear their full share of the blame by signing the 1961 Constitution and then repudiating their signatures before the ink was dry. The traumatic effect of this on the white population, already scared by events in the Congo, can hardly be exaggerated. So today, by a process of action and reaction, Europeans and Africans have moved further and further apart to extreme positions. The African leaders are under restriction and the Europeans are heading for U.D.I.

The basic task now is to try to reverse this process and persuade the Europeans and Africans, by action and reaction, back to the paths of moderation and good sense i.e. democracy.

The unknown factor is whether both Europeans and Africans, having peered into the abyss of U.D.I., have yet been shocked to their senses again.

2. *The objective*

To discover by personal contact and discussion with all shades of Rhodesian opinion, whether there exists a general desire to find a way out of the present deadlock, in which both sides, by digging in their heels, are merely digging their own graves; if there is such a desire, to try and crystallise and focus it; and to float a proposition.

3. *The target*

A year's moratorium. An agreed attempt by all concerned go back to square one, as it were, and start again where things went wrong i.e. at the repudiation of the 1961 Constitution by the nationalists.

This would involve, inter alia:—

- (i) Mr. Smith to withdraw the threat of U.D.I.;
- (ii) H.M.G. to withdraw the threat of sanctions;
- (iii) The Nationalist parties to come together and agree to work the Constitution and employ legal political methods;
- (iv) In return for the public assurance of (iii) the Rhodesian Government to lift restrictions and enable the Nationalist parties to take part in public life again;
- (v) The agreement by all parties to take stock of the situation at the end of one year. Depending on the degree of confidence achieved, this might mean a new constitutional conference to be held in London.
- (vi) some sweeteners by H.M.G. for both Europeans and Africans e.g.:—
 - (a) aid for African education
 - (b) training programme for African administrators
 - (c) loan on the London market
 - (d) official encouragement of private capital investment.

4. *Tactics*

Since we have both an acknowledged aim—to continue talks with the Rhodesian government; and a real aim—to try to change the climate of opinion, it will be necessary to pursue a double tactic of:—

³ R S Garfield Todd, prime minister of Southern Rhodesia, 1953–1958.

⁴ Sir E Whitehead, prime minister of Southern Rhodesia, 1958–1962.

⁵ W J Field, prime minister of Southern Rhodesia, 1962–1964.

- (i) holding Smith in the centre by engaging him in discussions, whilst;
- (ii) outflanking him to left and right by taking soundings of moderate opinion among Nationalist leaders, ex-Prime Ministers, business and farming interests etc to discover whether there is scope for a fresh approach to Rhodesian independence.

5. *The programme*

This suggests that the programme should perhaps allow for the Commonwealth Secretary to bear the main brunt of talking to the Rhodesian Government while the Prime Minister is chiefly concerned with climate changing.

202 PREM 13/543, ff 113–118 27 Oct 1965 **[Mr Wilson in Salisbury]: UK record of a meeting at Government House between Mr Wilson and a ZANU delegation led by the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole¹**

[The prime minister's decision to make a personal eleventh hour visit to Salisbury towards the end of Oct 1965 was opposed by a number of his advisers and Cabinet colleagues. Bottomley believed the trip would anger several newly independent African states, while Richard Crossman, the housing minister, compared the visit in his diary to Neville Chamberlain's visit to see Hitler at Munich (Richard Crossman, *The diaries of a Cabinet minister* Vol One *Minister of housing 1964–66*, London, 1975, p 356). Informing the Australian and Canadian prime ministers on 20 Oct that Smith still seemed still hesitant about 'taking the plunge', Wilson explained he was therefore embarking on 'a final effort to see whether there is any possibility of breaking the deadlock and of averting the disaster that otherwise impends' (PREM 13/542, ff 176–177). Earlier in Oct Smith had again visited London for another round of abortive talks (for the UK tactics, see CAB 148/18, OPD 42(65)1, 2 Oct 1965). According to Ken Flower, Smith's secret service chief who kept a diary of events, the Southern Rhodesian prime minister arrived in London with no intention of reaching a settlement. His one area of concern was that the British government might respond with military force if he declared independence. Indeed Fowler believed if military force had been threatened, Smith would have backed down. But Smith returned to Salisbury from London in buoyant mood, apparently because he had been told the military option was not 'practical politics' (K Flower, *Serving secretly: an intelligence chief on record. Rhodesia to Zimbabwe 1964–1981*, London, 1987, pp 44–45, 48–51). Accompanied by Bottomley, A E Oram (parliamentary secretary at the Ministry of Overseas Development), Sir B Trend and other senior officials, Wright (his private secretary) and joined later by Sir E Jones (the attorney-general), the prime minister held a series of meetings between 25 and 29 October. He returned to London via Livingstone (for talks with President Kaunda of Zambia) and Lagos (for a meeting with the Nigerian prime minister). Bottomley held talks in Dar-es-Salaam, Nairobi and Entebbe on his return home. At a press conference on 30 Oct as he was about to leave Salisbury, Wilson made a statement which is still seen as the green light to UDI: 'If there are those in this country who are thinking in terms of a thunderbolt, hurtling through the sky and destroying their enemy, a thunderbolt in the shape of the Royal Air Force, let me say that this thunderbolt will not be coming' (PREM 13/543).]

After welcoming the Rev. N. Sithole and his colleagues, *the Prime Minister* emphasised that the meetings must be regarded as confidential. At this stage he

¹ This meeting was held on the afternoon of 27 Oct. On the morning of the same day the prime minister met a ZAPU delegation led by Joshua Nkomo. After a long journey from their detention locations, the rival African leaders were tired, hungry and thirsty when they were bundled into Wilson's presence. The prime minister was shocked by their appearance and lost his temper. Unless food and drink were brought in immediately, he threatened to lead his staff personally into Salisbury to buy some. The other ZANU representatives at this meeting were E Tekere, M Mawema, M Malianga, S Muzenda, L Takawira, B Nkala, R Mugabe, E Zvobogo, E Sithole, Dr Mutasa.

wished to listen to the Rev. N. Sithole's views and possibly to ask a few questions. He then explained briefly the background to the recent negotiations and the British Government's approach to the five principles.² He emphasised our requirement for guarantees on unimpeded progress to majority rule. He added that the present Treaty proposal was not particularly encouraging since it could, as Mr. Smith had said, at best solve only one of the five principles. However, he had felt he should come to Rhodesia in order to discuss this proposal and had made it a condition that he should see the representatives of all shades of opinion including the Rev. N. Sithole. He hoped it would be possible to have more than one talk.

He was not happy about the arrangements for the Rev. N. Sithole's stay in Salisbury and had taken the matter up with the Rhodesian authorities. An officer from the British High Commission had been instructed to supervise the arrangements on his behalf and make any arrangements that might be necessary to ensure that satisfactory conditions existed.

He wished to discuss the question whether there was a basis on which independence could be granted to Rhodesia in accordance with the United Kingdom Government's criteria. In this connection he must make it clear that independence could be legally granted only if the British Government introduced legislation which was acceptable to the House of Commons. A UDI would be illegal and would be followed by economic measures which would have serious consequences for Rhodesia. Whatever constitutional arrangements were recommended to the House of Commons must be based, in accordance with the fifth principle, on the wishes of the people of Rhodesia as a whole. The Rev. N. Sithole and other political leaders might speak each for their own followers; and this might prove to be a more convenient method of obtaining the consensus of opinion than a referendum. It was unfortunate that the disagreement between the United Kingdom Government and Mr. Smith had been total on almost every point. This had led to threats of a UDI and the creation of a highly emotional atmosphere. He hoped that his visit would do something to dissipate this.

The Rev. N. Sithole handed a memorandum to the Prime Minister. He said that he wished to emphasise that the United Kingdom Government was ultimately responsible for Rhodesia and that even if a UDI was averted, the United Kingdom Government would not thereby have discharged their duty. The basic issue was not a UDI but the transfer of power to the majority. Acceptance of the 1961 Constitution would not solve the problem. Its rejection by Africans had been absolute.

His party had been alarmed at the reports that the Prime Minister and Mr. Smith were contemplating a treaty of guarantee for the Constitution. The only true guarantee of any people lay in the constitutional arrangements themselves and the provision which they made for democratic rule. Mr. Smith had chosen to ignore any constitutional arrangements of this nature and his aim was UDI. Britain for her part appeared to be unable to enforce the present constitutional arrangements against the threat of UDI. If she was thus powerless while she still retained sovereignty over

² In Sept 1965 Bottomley sent Smith a list of five principles to govern Southern Rhodesia's independence: the principle and intention of unimpeded progress to majority rule; guarantees against retrospective amendment of the constitution; immediate improvement in the political status of the African population; progress towards ending racial discrimination; acceptability to the Rhodesian people as a whole of any basis proposed for independence. A sixth principle was added in Jan 1966: no oppression of the majority by the minority, or of the minority by the majority.

Rhodesia, how much more powerless would she be to enforce any new arrangements which were secured only by treaty. In this connection he referred to the fifth paragraph of the memorandum, which expressed the view that the absence of any will on the part of Britain to enforce her ultimate authority in the constitutional arrangements for Rhodesia had been the cause of the present impasse. If Britain were unable or unwilling to use force, how could she claim that she had ultimate responsibility for Rhodesia? Even if her powers were limited, a firm assertion by British Ministers that they were prepared to use force in the event of UDI would have a very salutary effect on the followers of the present Rhodesian Government.

The Rev. N. Sithole then referred to paragraph 6 of his memorandum, which complained of the fact that the United Kingdom Government had allowed the Rhodesian Government to appoint diplomatic representatives in South Africa and Portugal. He said that his followers had regarded these developments as test cases of the United Kingdom Government's determination to maintain its authority.

Referring to paragraph 7 of the memorandum, the Rev. N. Sithole reaffirmed the view of his followers that majority rule must precede independence and not the reverse. It was unrealistic and dangerous to expect that the minority Government, after acquiring the full sovereignty of independence, would willingly hand over its powers to the majority. The traditional colonial policy of the United Kingdom Government, which led to independence on the basis of majority rule, must therefore be followed in the case of Rhodesia.

Referring to paragraphs 9 and 10 of the memorandum, the Rev. N. Sithole said that his followers took the view that the United Kingdom Government should convene a Constitutional Conference, representative of all interested parties, and, thereafter, grant independence under the new Constitution resulting from the conference. Should the Rhodesian Government fail to co-operate in this conference, the United Kingdom Government should suspend the 1961 Constitution immediately and impose majority rule.

The Prime Minister said that he wished to make several comments on the memorandum. The first concerned paragraph 2, which expressed concern at the way in which the United Kingdom Government were handling the Rhodesian issue and, in particular, at the fact that the Rev. N. Sithole's party had been kept in the background in recent negotiations. He wished to make it quite clear that under the fifth principle enunciated by the United Kingdom Government there could be no grant of independence by Britain without the United Kingdom Government first being satisfied that the people as a whole wished it. Recent discussions had, indeed, been conducted bilaterally with the Rhodesian Government but they had led to total deadlock. He and the Commonwealth Secretary were therefore currently engaged in consulting all sections of political opinion and they intended to continue this process. The Rev. N. Sithole had mentioned the need for a Constitutional Conference. In a sense, the present round of consultations was fulfilling that need. The United Kingdom Government had made it clear that they did not accept that the Chiefs represented the people as a whole. They suffered, amongst other things, from the handicap that they were paid servants of the Government. The Rev. N. Sithole had stated that there had been a promise of a constitutional conference resulting from the Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers last year. In fact, there had been no such promise at that meeting, although at the Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers this year he himself had said that he would consider convening a

constitutional conference if events justified this. But in these matters one had to be realistic and remember that there was no means of forcing the Rhodesian Government to send representatives to a constitutional conference. The present round of consultations, which he was holding, however, was not in substitution but in anticipation of a conference.

The Rev. N. Sithole had implied that the United Kingdom Government were giving the green light to a UDI. This was not true. The United Kingdom Government had made it clear, in a Parliamentary statement, that if there were a UDI the Rhodesian Government would cease to be the legal Government of Rhodesia and that economic measures would be taken against the country. These measures or sanctions would be very effective and would, indeed, make it impossible for Mr. Smith's Government to continue to act as a Government. It could be taken for granted that in the event of a UDI Britain and the international community generally would take firm economic action. Business interests understood this and that the results would be crippling. But, of course, comprehensive sanctions of this kind would bring great harm and suffering to the people of Rhodesia as a whole and any Government taking over from Mr. Smith would inherit a bankrupt economy.

The Rev. N. Sithole had also referred to Rhodesian representation in Portugal. The United Kingdom Government had made it clear both to the Portuguese and the Rhodesian Governments that they did not recognise the Rhodesian representative in Lisbon as a diplomatic representative and that they remained fully responsible for the external affairs of Rhodesia. This dispute had, however, been overtaken by the much wider problems presented by the threat of a UDI.

The Prime Minister went on to say that he wished to make one point very clearly. British public opinion was almost unanimously opposed to the use of force in the event of a UDI. Recent public opinion polls had strongly borne this out. The importance of British public opinion in relation to any course of action involving the use of force should not be underrated. There were many ways, for example, action by trade unions, by which a Government's prosecution of a war could be brought to a standstill. In the case of Suez where probably about half of the British population had been in favour of military action, there was little doubt that if the military campaign had continued, the force of public opinion would have forced the Government of the day to discontinue it. But it was worth noting that the military campaign was, in fact, brought to a standstill not by public opinion but by economic pressures in the shape of a very serious run on sterling. But even if British public opinion had not been opposed to the use of force in the case of Rhodesia, there were great physical difficulties in any course of action involving it. For one thing Rhodesia had no coastline. For another the country was quite different from any other colony in that it had its own military and security forces; and they were so powerful that it would be necessary to undertake a full-scale war in order to overcome them. At the time of the dissolution of Federation, the Labour Party had been critical of the decision to hand over Federal Armed Forces to the Rhodesian Government. But this was a decision which had been accepted by President Kaunda.

The Prime Minister asked whether it was the case that the Rev. N. Sithole was not prepared to agree to any grant of independence short of one which was based on immediate majority rule.

The Rev. N. Sithole said that this was the case.

Mr. Takawira said that it was most painful to him to hear that the United Kingdom

Government would be unable, on account of public opinion, to make any intervention in the event of a UDI.

The Prime Minister pointed out that the United Kingdom Government would intervene but only by means of economic sanctions. These, however, would be very effective, though he was not sure whether the Rhodesian Government fully realised how effective they would be. Not all the economic measures which could or would be taken had been made public.

The Rev. N. Sithole asked why, in that case, South Africa had not suffered from economic sanctions.

The Prime Minister pointed out that economic sanctions against South Africa had never been attempted. The United Nations had never agreed upon them. There had, indeed, been boycotts of South African goods but this was a quite different matter from sanctions applied by the international community as a whole. Few countries, perhaps only the United States, would be able to withstand the imposition of sanctions of this kind.

Mr. Takawira asked why, if the United Kingdom Government had a weapon of this strength, they could not summon a constitutional conference and use the weapon or the threat of the weapon in order to enforce the arrangements agreed upon at the conference.

The Prime Minister said that a similar suggestion had been put to him by Mr. Smith who had proposed that the United Kingdom Government should not impose sanctions unless it had been demonstrated that the Rhodesian Government were failing to observe the provisions of the Constitution, in respect of progressive African advancement, and that a treaty between the two Governments might provide for the use of sanctions in this event. He himself, however, did not agree with this proposition. It was one thing to use sanctions as a retort to the illegal seizure of power; it was another, and undesirable in principle, to use them as a means of enforcing particular policies.

The Prime Minister went on to say that he had come to Rhodesia in order to see whether there was any basis for negotiation between interested parties which might provide a peaceful transition to majority rule. Personally he regretted that the African Nationalists had not subscribed to the 1961 Constitution. He understood their reasons for rejecting the Constitution, but if they had worked with it, they would have by now acquired a considerable degree of parliamentary experience and would, in his view, be much closer to majority rule than they or anyone else in 1961 would have supposed. He attached great importance to the education and training of Africans for the exercise of political power and for administration and was anxious to work out with the Rhodesian Government some scheme whereby this could be achieved. He fully realised that there were many educated Africans in Rhodesia, but the art of government involved many skills, for example in taxation systems, auditing, surveying and so forth.

The Rev. N. Sithole said that the lack of experience among Africans in this art was largely the fault of minority rule. If majority rule were granted, there would be no problem in sending Africans to various countries in order to learn the necessary skills.

The Prime Minister enquired what prospects there were of a political reunion between the Rev. N. Sithole and Mr. Nkomo. He explained that the friends of Rhodesian Africans all over the world, including Prime Ministers of leading African Commonwealth countries, were worried by the divisions between them. These

divisions undoubtedly weakened the cause of Africans in Rhodesia and gave a lever to the opponents of African advancement.

The Rev. N. Sithole said that he bore no enmity towards Mr. Nkomo but there were differences of method between them and, indeed, of substance; and in any case he saw no reason why there should not be more than one party representing the African cause. This had been common enough in other colonial territories before they attained their independence.

The Prime Minister asked whether the Rev. N. Sithole would be prepared to meet Mr. Nkomo perhaps jointly with the Prime Minister.

The Rev. N. Sithole indicated dissent.

Mr. Mugabe referred to the Prime Minister's statement that he wished to see a more intensive programme of education and training for Africans and asked whether this wish was related to African education and training for its own sake or to a belief that the United Kingdom Government should not grant independence until more Africans had been trained for government.

The Prime Minister said that he certainly thought that it would be desirable for Africans to have further training. The same view was taken by the Prime Minister of Nigeria and some other African Commonwealth Prime Ministers. But he must be quite frank, as he had been with Mr. Nkomo, and say that, in his view, conditions in Rhodesia were not yet ripe for the introduction of majority rule. What was required was a transitional period during which Africans could not only learn the techniques of administration but also learn to work together with Europeans and *vice-versa*. He hoped that there might be a period of truly multiracial government not only before the grant of independence but for some time afterwards. The period before independence could be granted should not be measured in years but rather in functional terms, *i.e.*, in terms of the period which was required for political passions to cool and for sufficient Africans to learn the necessary skills. He realised that the Rev. N. Sithole and his supporters would be disappointed with this reply but they would understand his wish to conduct these talks on a completely frank basis.

Mr. Mugabe confirmed that the answer was disappointing and disputed the fact that Africans in Rhodesia were less qualified for majority rule than had been Africans in other countries, for example, Zambia, at the time when they had been granted independence.

The Prime Minister said that if this were so, it said a good deal for the policies of Rhodesian Governments and somewhat undermined the arguments which he had been deploying against Mr. Smith. But, in fact, it had not been the policy of Rhodesian Governments, as it had been of British Governments in respect of those colonial territories which they had directly administered, actively to train Africans for majority rule. He fully realised that Africans could be trusted to pursue non-racial policies in a multiracial State. Indeed, he had made to Mr. Smith the point that the Kenya Government had been generous in its attitude to Europeans. But the present situation in Rhodesia was too much charged with bitterness and recrimination to permit the contemplation of immediate majority rule. The aim should be to bring about the necessary conditions for this as soon as possible. He would like to see a situation in which the Africans agreed to co-operate fully, and on a constitutional basis, with the 1961 Constitution, which could be improved in certain ways, and to encourage all their people to enrol on the voters' lists. The present situation was a vicious circle: on the one hand, Mr. Smith took action which the Africans regarded as

unconstitutional, undemocratic and characteristic of a police State; on the other, the Africans at times resorted to violence and were then detained or restricted. He believed that the strongest weapon to Mr. Smith's hand was the fact that the Africans had shown no disposition to work the 1961 Constitution. He could say with confidence that President Kenyatta had expressed much the same view to him recently in Nairobi when he had said that there were still people in Africa who derived more satisfaction from political agitation than they did from responsible government. It was not enough for the Rev. N. Sithole and other African Nationalists to pursue policies simply with a view to hearing the cheers of their own followers. He knew that what he had been saying went against much of their political objectives and practices, but he had said it only in their own interests. He was conscious that the course of action which he had been advocating involved the greatest sacrifice of all, namely the sacrifice of publicly held positions. But what alternative was there? There were no thunderbolts which could put the situation aright.

In further discussions, certain members of the delegation expressed the view that threats of a UDI were a red herring drawn across the trail of the real issues; one member suggested that a UDI might afford the African Nationalists their last chance of recognition, since they would then set up a Government-in-exile which the British Government, in the absence of any legal Government in Rhodesia, would be bound to recognise. In answer to a question from the Prime Minister, the *Rev. N. Sithole* indicated that any Government-in-exile would have to be a joint one formed by himself and Mr. Nkomo. *The Prime Minister* and *the Commonwealth Secretary* explained that the consequences of UDI would be very serious, not only in terms of the hardship caused to Rhodesian Africans by retaliatory economic sanctions but also in terms of the grave economic damage which the Rhodesian Government could inflict upon the copper interests of Zambia by withholding power for the mines and access to the sea. The Prime Minister also explained that the United Kingdom and other Governments could not recognise a Government-in-exile formed by African Nationalists because in the event of a UDI the only legal Government of Rhodesia would be the United Kingdom Government.

The Commonwealth Secretary pointed out that the climate of world opinion had greatly changed since 1961, in so far as international opinion would make it impossible for a minority Government in Rhodesia to renege from constitutional commitments into which it had entered in respect of African advancement.

In answer to a question, *the Prime Minister* said that for the United Kingdom Government to suspend the 1961 Constitution would be a meaningless gesture in so far as we did not retain any physical control over Rhodesia. It was necessary, as a first step, to prevent a UDI with all the disastrous economic consequences which it would entail, and then to progress by consultation and agreement rather than by an ineffectual suspension of the Constitution.

In conclusion, the Prime Minister said that he hoped and expected that as a result of his visit the political situation in Rhodesia could never be the same as it had been before he arrived. He intended to continue the process of consultation, which he had initiated, between the United Kingdom Government and the Rhodesian people as a whole. He had not yet formulated any precise ideas on the method of this consultation; but he intended that there should be a continuing liaison of one kind or another. He might ask one of his colleagues to stay behind or he might propose some kind of continuing commission.

203 CAB 130/244, MISC 84/18

5 Nov 1965

'The impact on the Rhodesian economy of measures in the event of a UDI': Cabinet Office minutes (item 3) of a meeting of officials¹

The Meeting considered a note² by the Department of Economic Affairs (MISC. 84/26) assessing the impact on the Rhodesian economy of the economic measures which it had been agreed would be taken by the British Government in the event of a u.d.i. In introducing the paper *Mr. Vernon*³ said that its conclusions did not greatly differ from previous papers on this subject i.e. that while economic measures would inflict damage on the Rhodesian economy there could be no dramatic result overnight and it might take as long as a year to eighteen months for the effects to be felt; this would be true even if we had the support of all countries (excluding Zambia and South Africa). The paper referred to the possible countermeasures which the Rhodesia Government might have planned in the eventuality of a u.d.i. Attention was drawn to a mistake in the penultimate sentence of paragraph 4 where the figures should be 25,000 tons and £¼ million respectively.⁴

The main point made in discussion was that the paper was written from the narrow economic standpoint; it did not deal with the financial measures we would take nor with the very important psychological effect in Rhodesia of the loss of confidence and a general run down of the economy. It was generally agreed that a different presentation would be required if the paper were to be used for the purpose of gaining the support or co-operation of other countries for our policy.

There was some discussion of the question whether, if the economic effects were as limited as the paper indicated, this should be brought again to the attention of Ministers, possibly with a recommendation that stronger economic measures should be introduced or even that there should be reconsideration of the use of force.

In discussion the point was made that Ministers had already been informed of the conclusion that our economic measures could not be relied on to be fully effective and had decided on present policy in knowledge of this. It was agreed however that the matter might need to be further considered.

¹ This was an official committee reporting to the Cabinet on 'Southern Rhodesia; action in the event of a UDI'. It was chaired by Sir A Snelling (CRO) and included officials from the Dept for Economic Affairs, Treasury, MoD, Home Office, CO, CRO, Board of Trade, Ministry of Power, the Attorney-General's Office, and the Bank of England.

² Not printed; cf 196.

³ Dept of Economic Affairs.

⁴ The sentence referred to Rhodesia's sugar exports under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement and in its corrected form it read: 'The loss of the high CSA price for sugar on 25,000 tons would mean a certain loss of £¼ million pa and there is considerable doubt whether alternative markets could be found elsewhere.'

204 DO 207/5, no 3a

13 Dec 1965

[Zambia and UDI]: letter from Mr Wilson to President Kaunda

[Ian Smith declared UDI on 11 Nov 1965. Almost immediately attention turned to the consequences for Zambia. President Kaunda asked Britain to send troops to help Zambian troops defend the Kariba hydro-electric power complex that provided most of the electric power for Zambia's Copperbelt. Kariba straddled the Zambezi border between Zambia and Rhodesia and the British government refused to comply with Kaunda's request for British troops to be stationed on the Rhodesian side. Zambia threatened to turn to any

power of its choosing for help. The troop issue remained unresolved but early in Dec Zambia accepted an RAF squadron to defend Zambia's air space. Zambia's coal supplies from the Wankie coalfield in Rhodesia came next under threat. On 19 Dec, in a move intended to bring in an extra £10 million for Rhodesia's economy, the Rhodesian government imposed heavy duties on the export of coal and coke from Wankie. The UK responded with a £3.5 aid package to Zambia. Finally, and most serious of all, Rhodesia's decision to cut off oil supplies to Zambia through Rhodesia (action prompted by oil sanctions against Rhodesia) led to the introduction of petrol rationing in Zambia at the end of Dec. A large-scale rescue operation was mounted by Britain, Canada and the US, with the co-operation of the Congo, Tanzania and Malawi. Oil was carried into Zambia by air, rail and lake transport.]

My dear Kenneth,

I am very concerned that you and I may be getting at cross purposes. I have therefore asked Cledwyn Hughes to advance the time of his departure from London and to bring you this letter so that you may know all that is in my mind before you take any irrevocable decisions. The decisions are yours, but I want to be certain that you take them in the clear knowledge of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government.

First, let me say this. The British Government is deeply committed to the overthrow of the Smith regime. Any decision which you might take which is based on any other premise would be quite wrong. For the British Government to fail in its responsibility to quell this rebellion would—as I know and as you know—mean the end not only of the Commonwealth as we know it at the moment but also the end of any real prospect of racial harmony in Africa and perhaps throughout the world. You know me well enough to know that I could not be a party to any such policy.

We mean therefore to succeed. You may not agree with us about the use of military force. But this is a dispute about methods not about objectives. Even so, we have taken, in the measures which we announced last week, still more stringent financial and economic sanctions, which, to our knowledge, are now starting to bite.

But more than that. President Kenyatta¹ has now called for a further meeting of the Security Council. I welcome this initiative and you will find that the British Government will take a thoroughly constructive approach to the Debate in the Security Council and to a new resolution—even a Chapter 7 resolution—provided it does not automatically commit us to the use of military force immediately. I myself shall be in New York on the day you receive this letter and shall not hesitate to take part in the Security Council's proceedings myself.

In the Security Council, we shall be ready to support a Chapter 7 resolution which advocates the whole range of penal financial and economic measures. We are quite ready to throw the book at Smith. We shall be ready to give the Secretary-General a supervisory role which would enable him to report back to the Security Council in, say, six or seven weeks time, when the measures laid down by the resolution, which will of course be mandatory on every Member of the United Nations, have had a chance to succeed. If the Secretary-General then reports that the sanctions are failing, then—but only then—we ourselves would be ready to consider taking more drastic measures.

As you know, I have never totally ruled out the possibility of using force, for example, to restore law and order. I have only considered it wrong to use force to impose a constitutional solution on Rhodesia. But I can quite see that there may come a time when force will have to be used. The important thing is to get the timing

¹ Jomo Kenyatta, prime minister of Kenya, 1963, president, 1964–1978 (died).

right. We do not want to take a sledgehammer to this when a pair of nutcrackers will do. A Rhodesia laid waste will benefit neither Europeans nor Africans, neither Zambia nor Britain.

In addition, we are hard at work on the Kariba problem. I fully understand your anxieties here. But it seems to me that our interests are identical. Of course you wish to maintain the prosperity of the copper belt. I for my part wish to keep copper supplies coming into the United Kingdom: if they stop, I might well have a couple of million unemployed on my hands. We have a common interest here. So we are going ahead, in our consultations with the International Bank, to see whether we can, under United Nations auspices, get a physical presence round Kariba to protect the installations. We are hard at work and I will let you know just as soon as we have progress to report.²

Finally, we are determined to go ahead with oil sanctions. My sole pre-occupation has been to ensure that these sanctions, when instituted, will be multi-lateral and therefore effective. My concern has also been to ensure that when oil sanctions against Rhodesia begin to bite, we are ready with a plan for supplying Zambia. What this really means, Kenneth, is getting the Americans committed. It has been for this reason, above all others, that I have been delaying. For the fact is, that once the Americans are committed on this, not only will contingency planning for Zambia be much more effective, but the psychological blow to Smith could be mortal. Given American pre-occupation with success, this could be decisive. I shall be discussing all this with President Johnson in Washington on Thursday night.

So I hope you will agree that we are not being inactive. Please believe me when I say that I fully understand how intolerable you must feel the presence of this police state run by racial supremacists on your Southern border to be; how intolerable the pressures on you to bring about their swift obliteration. But I hope that what I have said in this letter will convince you that we really mean business. You will have, within a few hours, proof of this when you receive reports of the Security Council's proceedings. You will, I hope, have proof of this as soon as our work on Kariba is finished. And finally you will have proof of this when our consultations with the United States Administration on the related supplies [? issues] of oil sanctions and contingency planning for Zambia come to fruition.

Let me sum up. Our purpose is to quell this rebellion. Our policies are as I have outlined them. I am personally convinced that they will succeed in their aim. I would say to you that, before you insist on more violent methods, you should give less drastic methods a fair trial. If they did not succeed, then we have not finally ruled out the use of force. At all events, when you come to take your decisions, I want you to know precisely where we stand. That is why I have written you this letter.

With deep affection,
Harold Wilson

² The UK asked Australia and Canada if together or individually they would send troops to be stationed by agreement in the Kariba area. Both declined, although Canada participated in the Zambian POL (petroleum, oil, lubricants) rescue plan. The Australians declined, for reasons explained by the high commissioner in London, Sir A Downer, when approached by Sir S Garner. Australia was already hard pressed in Malaysia and Vietnam; Rhodesia was a long way away and of no direct concern; and Smith would not accept the proposal. Downer also 'expatiated, on familiar lines, on the excesses of the "new" members of the Commonwealth, which made [the proposal] an unreality' (DEFE 13/471, minute by Garner, 7 Dec 1965).

205 DO 207/5, no 4 13 Dec 1965
'Rhodesia': CRO note for Mr Bottomley on UK aims and means

Our aims

Our aims are:—

- (a) to end the rebellion as soon as possible;
- (b) then to restore constitutional government.

Our means

The means at our disposal are:—

- (a) diplomatic and political action;
- (b) economic and financial measures;
- (c) publicity and propaganda;
- (d) military action.

Taking these in turn:—

(a) *Diplomatic and political*

We have already exhausted most of the steps we wish to take under this heading (though others want to hot up the pace, e.g. Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting, further action by Security Council).¹ The former Ministers have been dismissed, legislation has been passed by the British Parliament, the matter was reported to the Security Council on our initiative, diplomatic representatives have been withdrawn, formal recognition has been withheld by every country in the world, we have pressurised all other Governments to take action corresponding to our own.

It would of course be possible to go further:—

- (i) in Rhodesia by strengthening the power of the Governor, by withdrawing the 1961 Constitution altogether—but action on these lines would only rally European support for Smith;
- (ii) internationally by taking the matter further at the United Nations (which is now happening, in any case, not on our initiative). This could provoke a crisis with South Africa and runs the risk of increasing the pressure for military action; moreover the U.N. will be encouraged to tie our hands for the future and subject us to their insistence on majority rule immediately after the rebellion is over. If this insistence were to prove irresistible, chaos is likely to ensue; and it might be better to hand the whole problem over to the U.N. now.

(b) *Economic and financial*

We have already taken most of the financial steps available and have banned virtually all our exports from Rhodesia. There remains the question of imports into

¹ One of Wilson's first responses to UDI was to consider sending Lord Mountbatten to Salisbury as an emissary of the Queen in order to make contact with Sir H Gibbs, to convey to him a royal message, and perhaps also to confer upon him a decoration. The prime minister raised the idea with the Queen during an audience on 16 Nov. The Queen was interested but wanted something in writing, preferably that could be published, before further action was taken. Mountbatten was keen to go but the Queen's advisers expressed reservations because the Queen might be compromised and Mountbatten's position endangered. The idea was not pursued (PREM 13/553, minutes by D J Maitland, 18 Nov 1965). See also part I, p cxxviii, note 51.

Rhodesia (especially oil). We are ready to apply a ban but this leads into two difficulties:—

- (i) *South Africa*: who is in a position to keep Rhodesia supplied;
- (ii) *Zambia*: who could be ruined if supplies are cut off before remedial action is complete.

(c) *Publicity and propaganda*

This is likely to become the most powerful weapon from now on. Indeed the real war we are waging is not an economic nor a military one, but a psychological war. The quickest way of bringing the rebellion to an end is to convince sufficient Europeans in Rhodesia that:—

- (i) the Smith regime cannot win (for this purpose it is not necessary to bring the Rhodesian economy to a grinding halt, but merely to prove that this will happen within a foreseeable time);
- (ii) their future after the rebellion is over will be better than if the siege under the rebellion continues.

The difficulty here is that we cannot conduct operations according to the requirements of the immediate situation. Our tactics and our strategy conflict, for anything said to encourage European return to loyalty is likely to cause Africans elsewhere to scream. The most that the Europeans are likely to be brought to accept is a return to the 1961 Constitution (possibly with minor modifications) under a Government of what they would call ‘moderates’—with full democracy deferred for some years. The Africans hope for one man, one vote, at least within a short time. Our compromise plan of a degree of British control immediately, while over a period of a few years and through successive stages full independence on a democratic basis can be worked out, appeals fully to neither side.

Indeed there is a further complication in our publicity since we are speaking to at least three audiences (1) Europeans in Rhodesia; (2) Africans; (3) British opinion. We must recognise the stark fact that at least two lines of publicity acceptable to opinion in this country (i) that our offer to send forces to Zambia was designed to prevent the arrival of others; and (ii) our readiness to entertain proposals from Mr. Smith, have immensely harmed the British reputation in Africa and have more than counter-balanced the firm measures we have taken. The distorted emphasis given to statements on these matters have soured people like Kaunda and Nyerere and are the background to the O.A.U. nonsense which we now face.

In Rhodesia itself there is the further complication that, in getting our case across, there has been a long period of distrust of successive British Governments.

(d) *Military*

We have said from the start that British forces would enter Rhodesia if invited, or to restore law and order (if it broke down). We also contemplate stationing British forces in Rhodesia if we take over the administration when the rebellion is over. In Kariba we have stated that ‘we would not stand idly by’ if power were cut off from Zambia, and we are currently discussing with the World Bank plans for neutralising Kariba (though the World Bank seem to be thinking more in terms of administrative control and possibly some security guards rather than of the presence of troops).

In Zambia a squadron of Javelins is stationed in Ndola with a contingent of the R.A.F. Regiment and with a radar environment installed in Lusaka; the R.A.F. have operational control of the airfields at Lusaka, Ndola and Livingstone. Negotiations for sending a British battalion to Zambia are currently in suspense.²

² Within the UK the following arrangements were made to co-ordinate government action on Rhodesia. The prime minister held short daily meetings with the ministers concerned to review developments and issue policy directions. The first secretary of state at the Department of Economic Affairs (George Brown) chaired a ministerial committee to consider the impact of sanctions against Rhodesia on the British economy and the UK's economic relations with other countries. Cledwyn Hughes (minister of state at the CRO) chaired a steering committee to serve the prime minister's daily meetings. Sir Arthur Snelling (deputy under-secretary of state at the CRO) chaired a committee to co-ordinate the work of the following official committees: a committee chaired by Sir E Roll (permanent under-secretary of state, Department of Economic Affairs) to serve Brown's ministerial committee; an information committee chaired by Sir A Clarke; and a sub-committee of the Joint Intelligence Committee to supervise the collection and circulation of intelligence on Rhodesia (CAB 130/254, MISC 100/A/4, 19 Nov 1965).

206 FO 371/182039, no 23 23 Dec 1965 **[Action against Rhodesia]: letter from J E Killick¹ to C M Le Quesne on the views of the US State Department**

Angus Walker² recently learned from confidences made to him on a personal basis by contacts in the State Department and White House that the Americans have been giving much thought to our policy towards Rhodesia and that their conclusions have been put on paper. We suspect that these conclusions include calculations about the use of military force. The State Department have been reluctant to tell us officially of their thoughts probably because they feel that to do so would compromise their own position i.e., that Rhodesia is primarily a U.K. responsibility and it is up to H.M.G. to call the tune and to be primarily responsible for paying the piper.

2. However, in the light of this it was not wholly unexpected when the Ambassador called on Thomas Mann³ on Wednesday, 22nd December, in connexion with another subject, that Mann volunteered some views on Rhodesia. He said that the State Department had considerable doubts about the short-term effectiveness of economic sanctions. At the same time the Bureau of Economic Affairs in the State Department had made a study, a copy of which is enclosed with this letter,⁴ of the costs of maintaining Zambia while the sanctions took effect. Mr. Mann doubted whether the U.K. or the U.S. could afford the amounts of money involved. He pointed out that even if they could and all the planned operations were carried out, most of them were really uneconomic and would have little lasting value.

3. Mr. Mann emphasised that the thoughts he had put to us had not been cleared at the highest level in the State Department but at the moment it looks as though at official level the Americans think that (a) H.M.G.'s present policy will not bring about the sufficiently rapid downfall of Mr. Smith and (b) if Mr. Smith is not brought down rapidly then there is no hope of maintaining the Zambian economy for very long and copper supplies (always the nub of the problem for the Americans) will be

¹ Counsellor and head of Chancery, British Embassy, Washington, 1963–1968.

² First secretary, Washington, 1965–1968.

³ US under-secretary of state for economic affairs.

⁴ Enclosure not printed.

interrupted. It is ironic that the views of Governor Williams⁵ and Mr. Mann now appear to be coalescing, albeit for very different reasons.

4. Mr. Mann did not say what conclusions the Americans drew from these thoughts but from our conversations with officials both in the National Security Council and in the State Department it seems clear that the Americans foresee a situation in which it will be impossible to resist a demand for action under Article 42 of the United Nations Charter.⁶ They argue that for the sake of preserving copper exports Smith must be brought down quickly and that only military action can do this. At the same time they suppose that H.M.G. regard the large-scale military operation involved as militarily impossible and likely to have the very effect on the Zambian economy which we most wish to avoid. The United States Government not least because of Viet-Nam, surely cannot envisage military action themselves. The only alternative must therefore be a U.N. force. Our own guess is that these ideas which have been brewing within the State Department for some time will shortly come to the boil and that the Americans, unable to sit back and let us play the hand any longer, will probably offer us shortly after Christmas their assessment of the situation and the options which, as they see it, are open to the United Kingdom.

5. There are obvious weaknesses in the American argument but I think that you should be aware that these are the lines on which their thoughts are at the moment running and you may care to consider how they should be countered.

6. For myself, given American fears for Southern Africa as a whole and given Mr. Ball's⁷ recorded views on the importance of avoiding a U.N. resolution in Chapter VII terms, both on practical grounds and as a matter of principle I do not see how the Americans can regard a Chapter VII resolution with equanimity. Moreover, if it is their view that neither we nor they are militarily capable of cutting the Rhodesian knot, then it is difficult to understand how they think the Swedes and Ethiopians will be able to pull together sufficient sinews of war to do so at all, let alone in such a way as to preserve Zambia. Given that it takes a hundred tons of supplies per day to supply a brigade and that for military intervention in Rhodesia at least four brigades will be required, the logistic problems are enormous, and if we and the Americans, Canadians, etc., do not or cannot provide the logistic backing, will the Russians and East Europeans take on the job? What in such a situation are the Zambians to live on, and what are the political consequences for Zambia? Our own policy of tightening sanctions and of being prepared to negotiate is it seems to me, for all its disadvantages and shortcomings, the only one possible and it may very well succeed given enough time. I do not believe that a full assessment of all the factors involved can in the end lead the Americans to any other conclusions than that we must (a) resist the use of force as long as possible; (b) do what we can within reason to restrain

⁵ Mennen G Williams, US assistant secretary of state for African affairs.

⁶ Articles 41 and 42 are both part of Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. Article 41 authorises the Security Council to decide what measures short of force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions. They may include partial or complete interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air and telegraphic communications, and severance of diplomatic relations. Under Article 42, should the Security Council consider that the measures under Article 41 are, or are likely to be, inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea and land forces as may be necessary to retain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade and other operations by land, sea or air or by forces of UN members.

⁷ George Ball, US assistant under-secretary of state.

Kaunda and keep Zambia afloat meanwhile, and (c) watch carefully for any signs of cracking on Smith's part. Angus Walker has already argued with them on these lines.

7. In a sense, our position is somewhat like that of the Americans over Viet-Nam. We cannot escalate the 'war' against Smith to all-out military action; we cannot admit defeat; so we pursue a middle course which we hope and believe will be successful, given time, in bringing about a political solution in the sense of restoring constitutional government. A particular complication in our case is that our ally, Kaunda, keeps showing a disposition to escalate the 'war' for us. Our American friends (like us over Viet-Nam) see all sorts of risks and danger in our line of policy, and are questioning it in their own minds but must, I repeat, eventually come to the conclusion that there is no alternative. So I do not think we need be too disturbed by all this.

8. There is however some doubt in my own mind over exactly how we see the development of our own policy. Among the arguments to be put to Kaunda in Foreign Office telegram No. 3359 to Lusaka we say 'We think it inevitable that the stage of full economic warfare will be reached and that it should be hastened as much as possible so as to advance the date of Smith's downfall'. We make the point that this must not happen 'before Zambia's friends are able to exert their maximum efforts on her behalf'. The whole burden of the American paper and of Mr. Mann's remarks is that we cannot afford such maximum efforts. What are we to say to the Americans on this if they do resume discussion with us after Christmas?

207 DO 207/170, CPM(66)2 11 Jan 1966
 [Commonwealth Prime Ministers]: minutes of a meeting of
 Commonwealth Prime Ministers at the Federal Palace Hotel in Lagos¹
 [Extract]

... *Mr. Kamanga*² said he brought to the meeting the greetings of President Kaunda, who regretted that his presence at the Meeting was prevented by the crisis which had been provoked by the treacherous act of Mr. Smith. Zambia welcomed the convening of this Meeting in Africa, and hoped it would be the fore-runner of many such meetings to be held there. Zambia would have particularly welcomed this Meeting if it had been one of the regular series of meetings of Commonwealth Prime Ministers. The occasion of the present meeting however gave Zambia no joy.

At the last meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers President Kaunda had expressed his concern at the risk of U.D.I. He had issued warnings to that meeting and he had offered on Zambia's behalf all the help that might be needed, if necessary including the use of Zambia as a base for British troops to put down any rebellion in Rhodesia.

¹ Two notable absentees from the Lagos conference were Tanzania and Ghana. Although remaining within the Commonwealth, both had broken diplomatic relations with Britain over Rhodesia in Dec 1965 (Tanzania on the 15th, Ghana the following day). Relations with Ghana were restored in Mar 1966, after the coup against President Nkrumah (see 215, note 4, and 366). The breach with Tanzania lasted much longer. Tanzania stayed away from the next meeting of prime ministers at London in Sept 1966 and relations were not restored until July 1968.

² R C Kamanga, vice-president of Zambia.

The world was now faced with the risk both of racial and of ideological war. This could escalate to become a global war.

Zambia believed that the rebellion in Rhodesia was based on an illegal act the aim of which was the perpetuation of minority racial rule, and whose end was self-destruction. This posed a risk to international peace and security. At the moment of the U.D.I. Rhodesia had stationed troops on the Zambian border and had occupied the installations of the Kariba Dam. President Kaunda had been obliged to send Zambian troops to the border to protect against any invasion of Zambian territory. There was still a danger of conflagration, particularly in the area of Lake Kariba and in other areas where the line of the border was uncertain. The presence on Zambia's border of white troops imbued with racial bigotry could spark off a conflict.

Behind the present crisis in Rhodesia lay ideas of racialism, colonialism, economic imperialism and the kind of sentimentalism that found expression in the concept of 'kith and kin'. These were explosive elements. Mr. Smith had said he would not allow civilised standards to be destroyed in Rhodesia. But what did this mean? It meant a high standard of living for the European minority, based on cheap labour. It also meant the repression of opinion, the establishment of a police state, censorship of the press and radio, and the dissemination of rebel propaganda. The most elementary principles of human freedom had been violated, and Rhodesia was on the road to becoming a fascist state. Mr. Smith's revolt was against both reason and the rule of law. If it had been possible to defeat Hitler, it was also necessary to defeat Mr. Smith. The excesses which were now being committed in Rhodesia must be put down for the sake of Africa.

Further, Zambia was conscious of her obligations under the United Nations Resolution of 1960, on the ending of Colonialism. She was prepared to do whatever might be necessary for the general good of the peoples of the world and to help people who have never known freedom from minority rule. Even apart from this, however, the rebellion also threatened the peace and security of Zambia, and her economic well-being. There could be no doubt that it was agents of Mr. Smith who had been responsible for the sabotage of an electricity pylon in Zambia in November 1965. Hitherto, racial relations in Zambia had developed extremely well. The 'colour-blind' democracy which Zambia was seeking to build up could founder as a result of the consequences of the Rhodesian rebellion. Race and colour should not be the yardsticks for survival in the world. The Machiavellian tactics of the Smith regime must be defeated, and a future must be assured based on respect for human beings. Human beings were human beings whatever their race, colour or creed. And rebels were rebels who must be brought down whatever their colour if they threatened the peace and well-being of others.

Mr. Kamanga reminded the Meeting that force had been used by Britain in British Guiana and in Cyprus; it was being used to-day in Aden, and in other parts of the world. Failure to take action might plunge Southern Africa into racial fire and threaten the efforts for peace and racial understanding all over the world. The obscurantist views which some held must not therefore be allowed to deter the Meeting from action now.

Zambia was now seriously threatened by consequences which were in no way of her own making, in particular as regards the Kariba Dam. Zambia's rights to Kariba were in danger of violation and she would regard any interference with them as an unlawful trespass to which she would reply appropriately. Zambia wanted to see a

peaceful solution to the present crisis. For that reason she had called for British troops to occupy the site of the Kariba Dam. This appeal still stood. The presence of Rhodesian troops at Kariba was illegal, and he repeated Zambia's call to Britain to take action now, before it was too late. No action had been taken before the unilateral declaration of independence. Mr. Smith had been told by the British Government that force would not be used, and he then seized independence. No action had been taken by Britain in response to the threat to blow up the Kariba Dam which Mr. Bottomley had recently revealed. Was this the way to deal with a traitor? Or was Mr. Smith really regarded by Britain as a traitor? Zambia believed that Britain had given much encouragement to the Smith regime by Mr. Bottomley's recent statements. Zambia had no evidence that the Kariba Dam had ever been mined.

British actions had been the cause of much confusion. Britain had said she intended to crush the rebellion, but reports were now heard of Whitehall advising Mr. Smith to negotiate. This kind of double-dealing set new standards in the process of decolonisation in Africa. Britain had said she was not prepared to use force until there was a breakdown of law and order. But was not the rebellion an important step towards such a breakdown of law and order? It could only be concluded that Britain was waiting for the Africans to rise against the Europeans after which she would send in troops to protect the European population.

Very recently a party of British Members of Parliament had visited Rhodesia. They had accepted the hospitality of the rebels. What kind of behaviour was this? Why did these three M.P.s. not stay with the lawful Governor of Rhodesia, and why had Britain allowed them to make this journey?

Zambia considered that the rebellion must be suppressed either by the hook of economic sanctions or by the crook of force. He believed that failure to take short sharp action would lead to untold suffering by innocent millions. Zambia therefore urged Britain to send troops to Kariba, in order to take away what Smith believed to be his trump card; and then to take short sharp action to resolve the present crisis. The Commonwealth and all others concerned would stand condemned if they did not resolve this problem and help towards the just and progressive integration of the races in Africa.

Against Zambia's advice, Britain had chosen the method of economic sanctions. Zambia however was closest to the crisis and in a sense was at its centre. She was aiding Britain and despite her geographical proximity was doing all she could to take economic measures against Rhodesia. She was prepared if necessary to do more. It was however Zambia which was the target of Mr. Smith's retaliatory measures. He had attempted to act against Zambia over oil and by a massive increase in the tax on coal; but had been obliged to suspend his action by the reaction of the Zambian Government.

Zambia's land-locked position had made necessary the airlift of oil supplies from Dar-es-Salaam and the Congo which was being operated by Britain, Canada and the United States. Petrol rationing had been introduced into Zambia, and it would not be easy for Zambia to get by so far as oil supplies were concerned particularly at a period when her economy was expanding rapidly. The emergency was also interfering with the Zambian economy, and with Zambian economic planning. The longer the emergency lasted the more serious the consequences would be. Britain's allies had supported her over economic sanctions, but these same sanctions were hurting Zambia. Some countries had done nothing to implement sanctions, or had

continued to allow their citizens to trade with the rebels in the name of non-interference with the freedom of private enterprise; this excuse for the protection of self-interest was cause for disgust. Zambia called on the advocates of economic sanctions to invoke Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter, in order to make sanctions mandatory. It was said that it was Britain which was blocking the invoking of Chapter 7. He would be interested to know whether this was true and if so, why. Economic sanctions must not be illusory, and Zambia condemned the double standards of some members of NATO in their policy towards Rhodesia.

Zambia was committed to economic sanctions, but she could not agree to continue to suffer. If the crisis dragged on and Britain would not help over the Kariba Dam, Zambia reserved the right to call on other countries or groups of countries to come to her aid.

The Unilateral Declaration of Independence had obscured the need for majority rule in Rhodesia—rule by the consent of the governed. There was no need to remind Britain of democratic standards, but the cobwebs of racial prejudice and oppression must be swept away and urgent measures were required. The United Kingdom must suppress the rebellion, restore law and order, and reinstate the rule of the Governor. There must then be a Constitutional Conference at which, under conditions of full consultation, the arrangements for majority rule would be worked out. Next would come majority rule, and then independence.

There was no question of the Commonwealth dictating to Britain, but the spirit of colonialism could not be allowed to work against the forces of progress and change. Zambia had the right to demand that appropriate action should be taken at the right time. Zambia appealed to all States to awake to the real meaning of the threat to Rhodesia, and she appealed to Britain to follow a policy of prevention rather than cure.

Finally, *Mr. Kamanga* said he wished to inform the Meeting that it was not for lack of strength that Zambia had not sent troops to Kariba, but on account of her concern for race relations in Africa. No spark must be applied to this tinder-box. It was for the same reasons that Zambia had not called so far for aid from other countries. If however there was procrastination it was Britain and the West which stood to suffer most. Zambia was reaching the end of the road of co-operation with the policies which were being followed at present. If she could see no light soon through the jungle of prejudice and self preservation, her patience would run out. Zambia appealed to all the members of the Commonwealth, and to the world, for action now, before it was too late.

Mr. Wilson said that the Rhodesia problem was fundamentally a moral problem, not just a question of legalities of the techniques of reducing a rebellion. At a time when the issues of race and colour were increasingly dominating the world stage, the problem of Rhodesia presented a challenge to each of us and to the whole concept of a multi-racial Commonwealth. This problem could be settled only one way if we were to maintain a world civilisation based on equality.

It was entirely appropriate that the discussions had been opened by the Vice-President of Zambia, since no country was more directly affected and endangered by the consequences of the illegal action of the Smith regime. If it could be said that Britain had held back in any way on sanctions this was primarily because of the vulnerable position of Zambia. For instance there had been criticism over the delay in introducing oil sanctions, but Britain had borne in mind that oil sanctions could

not be introduced until the needs of Zambia could be met; and that this was not possible without the organisation of an effective air lift. Therefore oil sanctions had been introduced only when it was possible to operate them without damage to Zambia.

Mr. Wilson said that he had found himself in agreement with much of *Mr. Kamanga's* speech. It was clear that there might be some disagreement on methods and techniques, but he was confident that there would be full agreement on the objectives.

Prior to Rhodesia's U.D.I. the British Government had done everything possible to warn the Rhodesian Government of the consequences of an illegal action, in the hope of achieving a just and honourable settlement. He and the Commonwealth Secretary had visited Rhodesia just before U.D.I. and had insisted on meeting everyone in Rhodesia, irrespective of race, colour or party, who might have had some contribution to make to the settlement of the Rhodesia problem. They had held four meetings each with *Mr. Nkomo* and the Reverend *Mr. Sithole* and their supporters; these had been full and frank discussions. He had also succeeded in getting *Mr. Nkomo* and the Reverend *Mr. Sithole* together and had been interested to see how well they got on together without their supporters present; it was clearly essential for the future of democracy in Rhodesia to persuade these two African leaders to work together. Discussions had been held with non-Government white leaders, representatives of the Asian community and former Prime Ministers such as *Mr. Garfield Todd*. The fact that despite these wide ranging discussions, it had not been possible to arrive at a solution, was solely because of the racist obsessions of the Smith regime who had defied the British Government and shown utter contempt for world opinion. Moreover, while paying lip-service to freedom and democratic rights they had in practice outraged the fundamental and inescapable moral law of the right of all people of whatever race or colour to live in democratic freedom. In opposing this double standard, the British Government had based its position on five basic principles: the first of these was an insistence on guaranteed and unimpeded progress to majority rule, and the second called for built-in guarantees that there would be no regression once this constitutional position had been attained. It was on these issues that the talks with the Smith regime had broken down. As *Mr. Kamanga* had said, we were seeing in Rhodesia not only the denial of political and social freedom but economic exploitation based on colour.

When talks had broken down and Rhodesia had declared U.D.I. the British Government had been faced with a problem of unparalleled complexity and difficulty. In strict constitutional terms this was a matter between the British Parliament and the people of Rhodesia. But the British Government had always accepted that it was also a Commonwealth and world problem though it had not been easy to get this accepted by certain sections of public and Parliamentary opinion in Britain. It was because of this belief that he had sent the Foreign Secretary to explain Britain's policy to the United Nations, and he himself had made Rhodesia the main theme of his speech to the United Nations in December. The British Government were very grateful for the help and support given to them by Commonwealth Governments not least over the enforcement of economic sanctions which the British Government had immediately and unilaterally imposed. He was sure that the present Meeting would discuss the problem with high intention and seriousness and he hoped that it would be possible to reach agreement on how to end the rebellion and on what constitutional arrangements should subsequently come into being.

Mr. Wilson said that the first problem was how to end the rebellion. In this connection Britain had been criticised for not using military force and there seemed to be a belief that this policy was based on a reluctance to use against white people the force which had been used on a number of occasions in other colonial territories. This interpretation of the British Government's motives was totally wrong. The use of force in some colonial territories in the past had been the responsibility of previous British Governments, and on some of these occasions his party had opposed the use of force.³ But in any case he was opposed to the use of force against anyone unless it was used to attain an objective so important as to justify the sacrifice of human lives. It might be that the ultimate objective of bringing Rhodesia back to constitutional rule was of such importance but it was his firm belief that the problem could be settled by other means. It was also essential to recognize the practical difficulties involved in mounting a large-scale military operation against Rhodesia without causing great damage to Zambia, Malawi, and possibly other countries. Moreover, Rhodesia possessed highly efficient armed forces, and it could not be assumed that they would not resist an attack by Britain. Any military action against Rhodesia would be a gamble. Although it was true that legally and constitutionally Rhodesia was a colony and the British had ultimate responsibility, it was not a colony in the same sense as were other colonies. This process began in 1923 when a degree of self-government had been conferred on the territory including the right to possess armed forces. Further, on the break-up of the Central African Federation, Southern Rhodesia had inherited the Federation's armed forces. The Labour Party when in opposition, had wanted to oppose this transfer of forces to Southern Rhodesia but had decided not to do so because consent, albeit reluctant, had been given to the transfer by the other members of the Federation, Zambia and Malawi. *Sir Albert Margai*⁴ pointed out that Zambia and Malawi had been colonies at this time. *Mr. Wilson* agreed that this was so, but said that whatever pressures had been put on the territories to give their consent to the transfer, they had not been exerted by the present British Government. The history of this operation might be a cause for regret

³ The *Daily Express* newspaper in the UK (28 Mar 1966) commissioned a poll of 537 of the Labour Party's 621 candidates before the 1966 general election in Britain (DO 207/123, no 31). They were asked 'Would you oppose the use of force against Rhodesia in any circumstances?' Most gave qualified replies that divided into 10 categories:

Unqualified yes	7
Yes—if sanctions fail	21
Yes—but for restoring law and order should it break down	155
Yes—but as a positively last resort (by Britain or the UN)	54
Not meantime, but possibly later	52
Positively no	117
No—but agreement with party policy that it would be considered in light of governor's plea for help	22
Agreement with party line (no mention of force)	33
Don't know	8
Question unanswered or answer refused	68

⁴ Prime minister of Sierra Leone, who launched a vitriolic attack on Britain at the conference and demanded the use of force to crush the illegal regime.

but in practical terms the fact was that Southern Rhodesia had the most powerful armed forces in Africa and a highly capable air force which could only be matched perhaps by the armed forces of Egypt, though the R.A.F. planes now stationed in Zambia were capable of destroying the Rhodesian Air Force if it attacked. His purpose in stressing this military situation was to make clear the practical difficulties involved in the use of military force. It would certainly provoke resistance from enough extremists to comprise a strong opposition. During the operation it would be impossible also to keep supplies flowing to Zambia by air lift. Nor would it be possible to secure the generators at Kariba quickly enough to prevent the opposition from getting there first since the generators are 600 feet below ground [and] a handful of men could hold them against a large force, or destroy them. A massive invasion would, of course, ultimately be successful. But there would still be the formidable difficulties of mounting such an operation against a land locked country whose airfields could quickly be denied to an invading force. It was unrealistic to think that an operation on such a scale would not cause overwhelming damage to Rhodesia and to Zambia which might seriously prejudice the future of these countries. He did not rule out some sort of military intervention, not with the objective of bringing down the rebel regime, but of bringing Rhodesia back to the path of law and constitutionalism when other measures had prepared the way for this. At the same time the British Government appreciated Zambia's difficulties over Kariba and it was for this reason he had thought it essential to agree with Zambia on the stationing in Zambia of military units which could be held in readiness for whatever military action might be required. Zambia would be seriously crippled if power from Kariba dam was cut off, but he had stated in the British Parliament that Britain would not stand idle in the event of such a contingency.

Mr. Wilson then turned to the means by which the British Government was trying to end the rebellion. They believed that their most effective weapon was their economic strength. As a result of the sanctions which Britain and other countries had imposed, 95% or more of Rhodesia's normal exports were now totally embargoed. Rhodesia was denied the possibility of selling her tobacco crop; they had been forced to cut 25% of their imports at a very early stage after the imposition of financial measures and it was estimated that within the next few weeks 75% of their imports would be cut off. Rhodesia no longer had access to any of her reserves of foreign currency or her sterling reserves in London as a result of the British Government having set up a new British controlled bank, to hold the reserves and to claim any lodged elsewhere (e.g. Switzerland). Sterling area remittances—and hence the supply of liquidity—had been cut off.

Evidence available to the British Government left no doubt that as a result of these measures the Rhodesian economy was already under very heavy strain and the Smith regime was in great financial difficulty despite pretences to the contrary. The tobacco growers had no illusions about the possibility of selling their crop and the supporters of the Smith regime who had hitherto enjoyed a very high and sophisticated standard of living were bound to feel the effects of sanctions sharply.

Mr. Wilson said that the effect of these sanctions would be greatly increased if Zambia and Malawi were to impose a hundred per cent ban on imports from Rhodesia; this could cause Rhodesia a loss of foreign exchange earnings equal to Rhodesia's total earnings from her whole tobacco crop. But he did not think that the time had yet come for such action which might very well lead to retaliation by Mr.

Smith, for example as regards coal exports to Zambia. In the British Government's view the proper time for such action would be when a real crack in the Rhodesian economy became apparent and a final 'coup de grace' seemed necessary; this would get maximum effect while minimising the period of extra hardship for Zambia and Malawi. Close consultation between Zambia and Malawi, and Britain, would be necessary as regards timing; the British Government for their part would be happy to have such consultations.

Mr. Wilson said that the British Government was working out further financial and economic measures which they would take; these would be announced soon and others were being held in reserve.

Mr. Wilson pointed out that he had so far not brought into account the effect of the oil sanctions imposed three weeks ago. He considered that these and the financial sanctions were Britain's strongest weapons. They were biting, and biting effectively even though doubts as to their effectiveness were being expressed in various quarters, even by Mr. Smith himself. The oil embargo was different in kind from other sanctions because its impact could lead to a complete stoppage of Rhodesian economic activity; no economy could function without oil. Although the oil embargo had been in operation for only three weeks it was already having a crippling effect. The Rhodesian oil pipeline had been closed down after only two weeks of the sanctions. In illustration of the effect of the sanctions, he recalled that Mr. Smith had offered to allow oil to be sent to Zambia through Rhodesia if the Rhodesian pipeline would be used for the purpose, and had also offered to remove the £5 duty on coal exports to Zambia. Even when Zambia rejected the offer Mr. Smith nevertheless took off the £5 duty on coal exports to Zambia; this was clear indication that Rhodesia was feeling the impact of the oil sanctions and of the shortage of convertible currency which might be obtained for coal. Further indication of the effectiveness of the embargo was that Mr. Smith had very recently asked for salt water to be pumped through the pipeline in order to get out the 17,000 tons of oil still in it, even at the risk of corroding the pipe for further use; but this request had been turned down by the operators. Mr. Smith had no source of oil supply and despite allegations to the contrary had no oil in Beira. No pirate tanker had come into Beira at all and even if one arrived its oil would not be allowed to go into the storage tanks which were owned by Mobil and Shell both of whom were co-operating fully with the sanctions. The stocks in the Umtali refinery of Rhodesia would only last a few days more and other stocks might last only a few weeks.

Referring to a suggestion which had been made as to the possible action against Rhodesia if oil should come into that country illegally and whether a mandatory U.N. resolution binding on members would not be necessary, *Mr. Wilson* said that if there was such a leakage of oil into Rhodesia the U.N. would of course have to take action and that Britain would not oppose any U.N. resolution on the matter. He, however, felt that such a resolution in the present circumstances was not necessary since the oil sanctions were proving effective. He would be grateful to know if any member had information that the oil embargo was being breached.

Mr. Wilson next turned to the position of Zambia and said that this was a matter of concern to Britain not only because Britain depends on Zambia for her copper but also because of the fraternal relations existing between the two countries. He informed the Meeting that in co-operation with the Zambian Government and other countries Britain was working out many contingency plans, including schemes for

air and surface routes by-passing Rhodesia, for the transport of goods to and from Zambia in the event of the remaining supply routes through Zambia being cut. He reminded the Meeting that Zambia depended on Rhodesian transport for the carriage of about 90% of her imports and exports.

Summarising the effect of sanctions, *Mr. Wilson* said that three weeks ago when oil sanctions were imposed no one would have believed that arrangements for the air lift of oil to Zambia would have been so successful that in the next few weeks Zambia would be having enough oil to take off oil rationing while at the same time *Mr. Smith's* stocks of oil would be seriously depleted. The air lift of oil to Zambia was proceeding at a rate of 14 thousand tons per month; and by the end of February the rate was expected to rise to 30 thousand tons or twice Zambia's normal unrationed consumption. He reiterated that timing in the application of oil sanctions had been dictated by the British Government's wish first to ensure that Zambia could be supplied by air lift and he expressed appreciation of the immediate response which the Canadian Government had made to the British Government's request for assistance over the air lift. This was the first time in history that serious attempt had been made to apply oil sanctions and it was gratifying that it had been so successful; it could prove to be a new weapon to replace the need to use force.⁵

Mr. Wilson then said that he would wish to touch on two other points which had been raised by *Sir Abubakar*⁶ in his opening speech. Firstly, as regards the suggestion that the time had come when peace terms should be announced to *Mr. Smith* dealing with the future of Rhodesia after the rebellion had been ended, *Mr. Wilson* said that the British Government had been considering this matter but had felt that it might be useful to wait to hear the views of Members at the present Meeting. The British Government would, however, consider the matter with a view to making a statement probably in the next few days. They believed that the chances of the *Smith* regime being brought down and the rebellion ended would be improved when the people of all races knew what the future could be.

Secondly, there was the question of the form of Government to be established in Rhodesia at the end of the rebellion and the suggestion of a period of direct rule. He recalled that he had already stated in Parliament that a period of direct rule would be necessary; how long it lasted and the precise form it took would depend on circumstances prevailing in Rhodesia at the end of the crisis. It would certainly be necessary during such a period of direct rule to work out a new Constitution for Rhodesia since the present one had proved unacceptable to the people as a whole. Negotiations with *Mr. Smith* had broken down on this point in November last year and since then the 1961 Constitution had been perverted by *Mr. Smith*, with the introduction of such measures as the emergency and censorship. The latter in particular had brought home to many people in Rhodesia the extent to which Rhodesia had developed into a police state and to think again about the situation.

As regards the final Constitution to be worked out during the period of direct rule, *Mr. Wilson* said that such a Constitution would probably emerge after a

⁵ *Wilson* was able to mollify his critics in Lagos by telling them upon the basis of expert advice he had received, 'the cumulative effects of the economic and financial sanctions might well bring the rebellion to an end within a matter of weeks rather than months'. His words were incorporated in the communiqué issued at the end of the conference.

⁶ *Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa*, prime minister of Nigeria. On 15 Jan, just forty-eight hours after the conference, he was killed when his government was ousted in a military coup.

Constitutional Conference or as a result of a Royal Commission or both. He wished to make it clear, however, that these processes must be conducted in a free atmosphere and with full and free participation of all the people of Rhodesia. The Constitution must be based on the five Principles already enunciated by Britain; in particular, guaranteed and unimpeded progress to majority rule and a Constitution acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole.

Mr. Wilson rejected allegations that Britain would be prepared to negotiate with Mr. Smith. He said that Mr. Smith could only approach the Governor under conditions of surrender. Following that the Governor would convey peace terms to him. By seizing independence unilaterally Mr. Smith had proved his bad faith and had lost all claim to any direct negotiations with the British Government.

As regards the reference by *Mr. Kamanga* to the recent visit of British members of Parliament to Rhodesia, *Mr. Wilson* said that the British Government was not responsible for the action of Members of Parliament; this was especially the case with the present four of whom the only one who was a member of the Labour Party was in disagreement with the Government's policy on Rhodesia.

In conclusion, *Mr. Wilson* repeated that the action of the Smith regime was a rebellion in law. All acts done in support of the rebellion were treason. Mr. Smith had been dismissed by the Queen and he and his regime had no lawful authority. No one in the British Parliament had supported Mr. Smith's action. The Rhodesian judiciary had not acknowledged the illegal regime. Mr. Smith had not succeeded in unseating the Governor. No country in the world had recognised the illegal regime. All those Rhodesians who had been attached to British Embassies in foreign countries had been removed. No diplomatic representatives remained in Salisbury, only certain consular personnel. The economic measures taken against the Smith regime were taking effect, and they would be felt increasingly. Against Mr. Smith's predictions no capital whatever was going into Rhodesia, but capital was certainly leaving the country. Britain had guaranteed the pensions of Rhodesian Government servants against any arbitrary action by the illegal regime, but she had not called on these Government servants to leave their employment. This was because they had an important part to play in the future, and also a part to play in the present in helping to frustrate the aims of the illegal regime. It was clear that the censorship which had been introduced was abhorrent to all liberal-minded people in Rhodesia, and it had been rendered inoperative by the powerful radio transmissions which were now being broadcast from Zambia, from Malawi and now from Bechuanaland as well.

Mr. Smith and his friends knew that their time was up. All the information available to the British Government suggested that the nerves of the Rhodesians had broken. It was now clear that Portugal was not going to support Rhodesia, and even South African papers which had previously taken a pro-Rhodesian line were now saying publicly that it was clear that Smith had failed and that he now had no alternative but to put himself in the hands of the Governor.

Time was needed to bring the rebellion to an end. Nevertheless, he would ask the Meeting to look at what had been achieved in the last three weeks since oil sanctions had been introduced, and since he had last seen the Chairman in London. He was confident that sanctions would be effective, and he called for the support of all Commonwealth Governments in ending the rebellion, and bringing about majority democratic rule in Rhodesia. . . .

208 DO 207/5, no 30

13 Jan 1966

[Rhodesia]: minute by Mr Wilson to Mr Bottomley on economic and military contingency planning

I have been reflecting on the Lagos meeting¹ and our subsequent talk with Kaunda today. I hope and believe that we can now hold the Africans for a further interval. But it is clear that some of them are still sceptical of our ability to tumble Smith by economic sanctions alone; and although the Lagos communiqué gives us until July before we need to come under collective Commonwealth pressure again, I am sure that there will be renewed pressure before then for the use of force or a mandatory United Nations resolution. At the same time there is evidence that the oil embargo is beginning to hit the Rhodesian economy hard; and there are also some signs that Smith is becoming rattled. Finally, there is the fact that it is simply not going to be possible to restrain Kaunda beyond February 15 in closing the Zambian frontier to imports from Rhodesia (with the possible exception of coal); and that Zambian stocks will not suffice to enable the economy to survive, even on a care and maintenance basis, for more than about a month thereafter. It is in that month that we must seek finally to dispose of Smith.

For all these reasons we must be ready to make an all out effort in the next few weeks on the assumption that the crunch may come at any time from February 15 onwards. This seems to me to require action on three main fronts:—

(1) *Economic*. We must now consider intensifying our economic and financial sanctions. What more can we do in this respect; and when should we institute our further measures?

(2) *Military*. If we can expect to have a month—but not more—after February 15 in which we must seek finally to bring the rebellion to an end by all the means at our disposal, what range of military action must we contemplate for this purpose and what contingency dispositions should we be making?

In particular:—

(a) Kaunda was still unwilling to accept British troops in Zambia unless they constituted a commitment to cross the Zambesi and to occupy the Kariba Power Station. But I think that he was shaken by my arguments against this course; and he finally agreed that a British military mission should visit Zambia to consider the nuts and bolts of an operation to put a British contingent in Zambia. He made it clear that this did not imply any commitment on his part to accept our troops and that the whole exercise would be on a purely hypothetical basis for purposes of planning. Nevertheless, I am sure that we should follow up this possibility at once.

(b) In addition, we should try to revive the I.B.R.D. operation for the protection of Kariba on the basis of an Anglo/Canadian force for this purpose, our own troops being stationed on the Zambian side of the river and the Canadians on the Rhodesian bank. If an operation of this kind could be mounted, I believe that we could persuade Pearson² to contribute; and I have verified with Kaunda that he would be willing to consider it.

(3) *Post-rebellion phase*. We must now intensify our preparations for the action—political, legal, economic and military—which we shall need to take in order to control the situation in Rhodesia when the rebellion comes to an end.

¹ See 207.

² See 249, note 2.

I know that work is already in hand under all three heads above. But it must now be expedited; and I will try to arrange a meeting very early next week in order to take stock of the situation.

I am sending copies of this minute to the First Secretary of State, the Lord President, the Lord Chancellor, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Colonial Secretary, the Minister of Overseas Development and the Minister of State for Commonwealth Relations.

209 CAB 164/60, no 4

20 Jan 1966

‘Rhodesia contingency planning’: minute by Mr Healey to Mr Wilson

[Healey’s minute was in response to a minute of 8 Jan by the prime minister which Sir B Trend had drafted. It was sent after a restricted session of an OPDC meeting which considered the possible need to use force to finish off the Rhodesian rebellion. Wilson’s minute expressed confidence over putting British troops into Zambia, provided President Kaunda agreed. It continued: ‘What troubles me more is the prospect of having to go further and the difficulty of foreseeing, at this moment, in what circumstances—and, therefore, in what strength and by what means—we should best do so. I hope, therefore, that the contingency planning which we authorised you to put in hand will be directed to producing a choice of plans to fit quite a wide range of possible circumstances, extending from one extreme (at which no more than a token military intervention in Rhodesia would be required) to the other extreme (at which we might have to contemplate a virtual invasion of the country against both political and military opposition, followed by a period of what could be, in effect, military occupation and administration). One can see three or four (perhaps more) successive steps between one extreme and the other; and I should like to feel that we had plans ready, or as ready as possible, for each of these stages’ (DEFE13/471, no 647.)

I have discussed your minute of the 8th January with the Chief of the Defence Staff. The military situation in a nutshell is that for planning purposes we can either introduce forces into Rhodesia by invitation or we have to stage a full-scale assault: there are no intermediate stages.

Entry by invitation

2. By going in by invitation I mean introducing forces with the unqualified assurance that there would be no organised resistance. This does not rule out action by odd pockets of rebel police, small units of the forces, or armed bands of irregulars drawn from the white population. The assurance of no resistance from the Rhodesian Air Force is particularly important. Even a single fighter might inflict severe casualties on our troop airlift. A prerequisite of going in by invitation would be a secure point of entry, which means the uninterrupted use of the airport at Salisbury.

3. Even with this prerequisite, there are considerable risks entailed if we merely put in a token force of, say, one battalion. Should opposition harden and the mood of the country change, this small force might be overwhelmed before it could be reinforced.

4. There is a further point. Even if we had had assurance of no opposition from the Rhodesian armed forces, there is the possibility that the runways on the airfield might be obstructed at the last moment by residual rebel elements, and we should therefore have to be prepared for an initial parachute drop.

Entry against opposition

5. If we go in against opposition, there is no alternative to planning to mount a full-scale invasion. The forces required would include a sufficient RAF strike force, probably operating from Nairobi, to pre-empt the rebel Rhodesian Air Force, and at least a division of ground forces, apart from requiring the full co-operation of the countries involved. This would certainly mean taking a large number of units from Germany; it would pose considerable logistic problems and would necessitate the withdrawal of the RAF from the Zambian POL airlift. I understand that to assemble the necessary forces would take not less than six weeks, and probably about two months. To carry out the operation properly would entail our taking the initiative and striking the first blow at the Rhodesian forces—a step which would carry serious implications, not least in terms of strain on the loyalty of our own troops.

6. I have considered the argument that a much smaller force could be sent in across the frontier and that the Rhodesians would not resist it. This would be a matter of political rather than military judgment. If this judgment proved wrong, and the Rhodesians resisted, our defeat or withdrawal would follow. It would be militarily unsound to put such a force in without all the preparations and build-up needed for a full-scale invasion.

The most likely situation

7. The situation we seem most likely to face is that the present regime in Rhodesia crumbles and we go in by invitation. In this case, I am sure that more than a token force will be needed as it will be essential to take control as quickly as possible of key points such as the Kariba Dam, and the main public services as well as securing our point of entry. The Chiefs of Staff have estimated that two or more brigades will be needed. If the population reacted unfavourably to direct rule based on the presence of this force, it could lead to a hardening of resistance, resulting in a commitment to provide a comparatively high level of forces for a considerable period of time.

Present state of planning

8. Our present state of planning is as follows:—
- a. The UK Military Mission to Zambia, led by GOC Middle East Land Forces, will be discussing in the next few days the introduction of a battalion into Zambia.
 - b. An outline plan is being prepared based on the concept that the regime has collapsed and we have been invited in.
 - c. An examination is being carried out on the longer term force levels that should be deployed in Rhodesia after the collapse of the illegal regime with particular reference to the policy to be adopted towards the Rhodesian armed forces.
9. Finally I am having prepared (on a need-to-know basis) a concept of operations, based on full-scale military intervention, together with an examination of all its implications.
10. I am sending a copy of this to the Commonwealth Secretary.

210 CAB 130/464, REF 2(66)3 14 Feb 1966
'Rhodesia': CRO note for Mr Cledwyn Hughes's future planning group¹ on the three-pronged attack on the Rhodesian rebellion

Our attack on the Rhodesian rebellion is and must be three-pronged:—

- (a) economic measures;
- (b) propaganda;
- (c) politico-military strategy.

(a) *Economic measures*

Economic measures have been notably effective and we have secured far more international co-operation than we had expected. Apart from some acts of beastliness which must be reserved for the last minute—such as closure of the Banks and directions to British firms—the British Government have now virtually done all that is possible. There remains, of course, the possibility of Zambia 'throwing the book'. Indeed, all the indications are that by April the Rhodesian economy will be under extreme strain and there is little that we can do to improve on this date.

But extreme strain on the economy and collapse of the Smith regime are not synonymous terms. The battle we are fighting is one of psychology as well as on the economic front. Short of the use of force the regime will only collapse when sufficient Europeans in Rhodesia lose faith in it. The success of economic sanctions may by then lead to this point—but not to the point where they think the British Government have a tolerable alternative to offer.

(b) *Propaganda*

It is here that our policy has so far failed to achieve any results. There are no doubt deep reasons for this and no-one expected an easy success.

The basic reason is—and it is no good blinking the fact—that there is a fundamental difference between the British and European/Rhodesian philosophy. We are committed to unimpeded progress towards majority rule, whereas the Europeans are determined to control the rate of African advancement. To give them credit they are willing to give a fair deal to the African (in what we should perhaps regard as a paternalistic manner), but they are not prepared to fall for the claptrap of 'one man, one vote' or even to accept the normal workings of democracy (under which, clearly a quarter of a million people would be swamped by four million). Nor do they believe the professions of any British Government—they have been let down before (though the myth about this perpetrated by Welensky² is greater than the reality). Moreover they know from experience that any time-table for an African takeover is, in the event, inevitably foreshortened.

For this basic reason our consistent effort to show that the alternatives are not either i.d.i. or immediate black rule has failed to make any headway. It is clear that

¹ See 205, note 2.

² Sir Roy Welensky, prime minister and minister of external affairs, Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1956–1963.

the Prime Minister's speech of 25 January³ gave no encouragement, and Mr. Smith was not afraid of it since he allowed its publication in full.

There is no doubt a subsidiary reason that the European Rhodesians are ignorant about the world situation and prejudiced about African affairs, that minds have been 'brain-washed' by the Rhodesia Front and that there is now effective censorship. But, whatever the reasons, the fact must be faced that hitherto we have failed in the 'battle for men's minds'. Nor, while we should no doubt continue with existing publicity media (including Francistown) and perhaps step it up, does there seem anything very effective that we could do at this stage.

The foregoing points to two conclusions about propaganda:—

- (i) that we are unlikely to achieve much effect until sanctions have bitten more deeply and people are positively searching for a way out;
- (ii) that in any case it is unlikely that a majority of Europeans will be brought to accept our offered alternative in the near future. The most we can probably count on is that there will be some increase in the estimated 20 per cent opposed to u.d.i. and that the bulk of the remainder will be defeatist and therefore acquiescent.

(c) *Politico-military strategy*

The foregoing emphasises the importance of politico-military action at the right time. In other words, neither economic sanctions alone, and certainly not propaganda, are likely to bring an early end to the regime. Action from the inside must be organised. This will be an extremely delicate operation requiring careful organisation with the Governor (if he remains) and military preparations involving co-operation with the leaders of the Rhodesian armed forces so that, when the time comes, our forces can move in very rapidly and with a guarantee that they will not meet organised opposition. None of this will be easy particularly since the Governor has not so far accepted the need for British troops—and may not do so.

Of course, when the time comes for action everything else should be brought up to the maximum, including the final steps of economic pressure and all overt and covert means of propaganda. The preparations will involve careful and discreet contacts with the Rhodesian armed services and will certainly require further discussion with the Governor. It is on plans to this end that we should be concentrating our attention at present in the knowledge that we have possibly two months in which to bring them to fruition.

Some of the key questions which need to be answered are as follows:—

- (a) The present phase wherein we are gathering intelligence about military commanders will need to be replaced by a phase in which we are actively trying to win them over. What plans can we make to this end?
- (b) How could military action best be organised in Salisbury?
- (c) How can we best fulfil the absolute desideratum of the Chiefs of Staff of 100 per cent immobilisation of the RRAF? Subversion? Sabotage?

³ Wilson's speech in the House of Commons on 25 Jan 1966 was the occasion when a sixth principle was added to the existing five as the basis for a Rhodesian settlement (see 202, note 2). The prime minister also said there could be no negotiations with the illegal regime; when it fell it would be replaced by an interim government headed by the governor and representatives of Rhodesian opinion (*H of C Debs*, vol 723, cols 40–55).

- (d) What should be our policy on defections of senior officers? Cases are beginning to occur.
- (e) Can arrangements be made for getting alongside the Governor and for working out plans in co-operation with him for toppling the regime?
- (f) Is it still too early to start thinking about tempting away irreconcilables with emigration offers? (More information is needed about the Rhodesians reported to have arrived from Australia in Durban.)
- (g) What should be our policy if we are faced with a new regime which displaces Smith, but which has a programme that neither we nor the Africans can accept?

211 PREM 13/1156

18 Feb 1966

[Rhodesia]: letter from S J G Fingland¹ (Salisbury) to N D Watson² on the impact of sanctions on Rhodesia

As a result of press censorship and the very strict precautions which the Rhodesian authorities take to conceal any statistics on the economic front, it is very difficult, even for one sitting in Salisbury, to try to give an accurate picture of the effect of sanctions to date on the Rhodesian economy. Piecing together the information which comes to us through ordinary commercial and industrial contacts, however, Geoffrey Miles³ has prepared the enclosed note of the situation as we could see it in early February.

2. Setting aside the effect of petrol rationing, I think that the main feature of the past two months has been that in the event stocks of ordinary consumer goods have proved to have been higher than suspected, no doubt because importers and retailers had built up higher stocks than normal in view of all the warning talk about the effect of sanctions which preceded U.D.I. So for this reason mainly, shortages of consumer goods in the shops are still fairly marginal: and many of the shortages are being countered by the substitution of local products and South African products—e.g. clothing—for normal imports from elsewhere. There is little doubt however that the amounts of consumer goods which are now in the pipeline are very much less than the normal requirement. To some extent this will be countered by a growing output of locally produced substitutes; but, despite this, shortages of many more items should become apparent in the next few months.

3. This delay in running down stocks of consumer goods has, of course, had its effect on the employment situation in the retail trade. There have been retrenchments in this sector of the economy; but they do not seem to have reached the scale that was expected to be reached in the early months of this year, immediately after the Christmas and New Year holiday period was over.

4. Our information about the position in industry is patchy—which may in fact reflect very well the actual situation. Some industries have been very hard hit by sanctions, for example R.I.S.C.O. Derek Haysom, the Managing Director, told me himself the other day that, despite the fact that the firm is designated under government emergency regulations, they had had to give notice, effective as from the end of this month, to 35 European employees and considerably more Africans. I have

¹ UK high commissioner, Rhodesia, 1964–1966.

² Central Africa Division, CRO.

³ G Miles, first secretary, Salisbury, 1963–1966. The enclosed note is not printed.

heard separate estimates that the number of Europeans discharged was even greater—the estimates varying between 50-odd and 70. The motor companies have also been very hard hit.

5. On the other hand, many industrial concerns which do not rely on imports for their raw materials and which have been able to diversify their product to include substitute goods for the protected home market, are continuing in full and active production.

6. Petrol rationing has certainly affected the individual; but so far it has been a hindrance rather than a major and overwhelming difficulty. The basic ration, together with the allowance given to the city dweller according to his distance from his office, is enough to enable him, with some co-operation from his neighbour, to go to work without difficulty and indeed to carry on reasonable social activity. There is, too, a feeling in the air, which is fostered by statements by the regime and by the publicity given to petrol gifts from South Africa, that rationing is a phase which will be overcome, and that indeed it will probably not get much worse—and may soon get much better—than it is now.

7. The effect of sanctions on the ordinary man in the street has thus been only marginal so far; and it has not affected his attitude towards the regime. Indeed, for the ordinary white elector who favoured Smith's policies, the imposition of strong sanctions had been confirmation, as he sees it, of the British Government's general lack of regard for the white man in Rhodesia and its vindictiveness towards him. The average elector does not read the foreign press or listen to the B.B.C. and is generally happy to suck up what is fed to him through the R.B.C. and R.T.V., particularly the latter.

8. The better informed Rhodesian, the business man, industrialist, etc., is on the other hand very much aware of the threat to Rhodesia which sanctions represent. Many such Rhodesians who opposed U.D.I. however were looking for a quick effect from sanctions which would lead to the early restoration of constitutional government before the basic economy was threatened. Now, there is a feeling that the regime—who are not so far obviously overwhelmed by general or petrol sanctions may be able to hold out for a long time during which the economy of Rhodesia—might be run into the ground. The fact that the British Government have not produced any easy solution which offers a prospect of avoiding this outcome—and a growing fear that there may be *no* solution that will avoid it—is causing many of the better informed Rhodesians to direct their concern and frustration at the British Government, and to do their utmost in their businesses etc. to keep things going as best they can—merely because they cannot see anything else to do.

9. The farmers are in a category by themselves. They remain as a whole staunchly behind the regime, although I believe that there is some growing concern about their ability to get a return for their tobacco this year which will be sufficient not only to keep them going but also to produce the margin required to finance the planting of next year's crop. The success or otherwise of the regime in having the 1966 tobacco crop disposed of on a basis that would meet the tobacco farmers needs is likely to have an important effect on opinion generally. Most informed observers feel that if some, even minimal, arrangement is made to keep the tobacco farmers happy over this year's sales, then the regime are likely to be able to ride out the effect of sanctions for a long time.

10. This may sound very depressing but I think it is a reasonably accurate

assessment of opinion generally in Rhodesia on the effect of sanctions so far. From my own point of view, of course, the assessment is affected by the same limitations as govern the opinion of others living in Rhodesia—namely that I have no real inside knowledge of the state of the reserves, the amount of available foreign currency, the arrangements that are being made to dispose of exports, and, perhaps most important, the accuracy or otherwise of the growing belief that refined oil products are finding their way into Rhodesia in substantial quantities.

212 CAB 148/25, OPD 17(66)1, 2 & 3

4 Apr 1966

'Rhodesia': Cabinet Defence and Overseas Policy Committee minutes on the oil embargo, tobacco and future policy

[On 4 Apr 1966 a Greek oil tanker, *Joanna V*, bound for the port of Beira in Mozambique, the starting point for a pipeline to Rhodesia, was intercepted by HMS *Plymouth*. The British government claimed to be acting in accordance with a UN resolution of Nov 1965. Portugal was warned of the serious consequences that would ensue if the tanker discharged oil at Beira. The Greek government in turn warned Britain force could not be used unless the UN resolution was mandatory. Meeting in London on 6 Apr, a Commonwealth Sanctions Committee demanded a British application to the UN for mandatory sanctions. On the same day the UN Special Committee on Colonialism urged the use of force to end the rebellion. In a highly charged atmosphere, Britain requested an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council for authority to act in a situation considered a threat to peace. The UK resolution was approved on 9 Apr by ten votes to nil with five abstentions. It called on Portugal not to allow oil to be pumped through the pipeline or to receive oil for Rhodesia. All states were requested to divert ships bound for Rhodesia, and the British government was authorised to prevent 'by force if necessary' the arrival of vessels reasonably believed to be carrying oil for Rhodesia. A watch was kept outside Beira on *Joanna V*, a now stateless ship (ownership had been transferred to Panamanian registry but that too had been withdrawn). Another Greek-owned tanker, *Manuela* (also believed to be carrying oil for Rhodesia), was boarded from HMS *Berwick* 150 miles south-east of Beira and escorted further south, docking eventually at Durban. After British representations to the South African government, *Manuela* left Durban without discharging its cargo. Over the *Joanna V* incident the Smith regime ordered the residual British mission in Rhodesia to leave the country, a threat later retracted when unofficial talks on solving the Rhodesian dispute opened in London on 9 May (see 213).]

1. *Oil embargo*

The Secretary of State for Defence said that the tanker, *Joanna V*, was approaching Beira and at her present speed could arrive there at about 7 p.m. She was being shadowed by a frigate and her captain had said that he was proceeding to Djibuti. Since the Greek Government had acquiesced in action to prevent her reaching Beira the frigate had orders to intercept her if she held course for Beira. Force could not be used to stop or disable her without involving serious risk of loss of life and if the captain insisted on disregarding orders from the frigate he could not be prevented from sailing to Beira. There had been reports that the tanker's registration might be changed but at present the evidence was that she was still under the Greek flag. If the tanker did not reach Beira he intended to issue a further statement to the Press about the activities of our naval and air forces off Mozambique. He would consult the Foreign Secretary and the Commonwealth Secretary about the text of the statement.

The Committee:—

- (1) Took note of the statement by the Secretary of State for Defence.
- (2) Agreed that if the *Joanna V* did not reach Beira the Secretary of State for

Defence, after consultation with the Foreign Secretary and the Commonwealth Secretary, should issue a Press statement on the lines he proposed.

2. Tobacco

The Commonwealth Secretary said that no firm information was available about the sales of tobacco in Rhodesia but the impression was that little had so far been sold.

It was agreed in discussion that we should try to obtain reliable information about the way in which the tobacco sales were going.

The Committee:—

(3) Invited the Paymaster General to consider whether reliable information could be obtained about the tobacco sales in Rhodesia.

3. Future policy

The Committee considered a note by the Secretaries (OPD (66) 45) covering a memorandum by the Acting Chairman of the Rhodesia Steering Committee on future policy.

The Commonwealth Secretary said that the memorandum set out the present position in regard to the effect of sanctions on Rhodesia and the alternative courses which were open to the Government. There was evidence that sanctions were having an effect on the Rhodesian economy, but this was slower than had previously been hoped. There were at present two main leaks:¹ oil supplies were reaching Rhodesia from South Africa and Mozambique, excluding the possibility of oil tankers arriving at Beira, at a level sufficient to maintain the present ration; Rhodesian exports to Zambia, although their pattern had changed, were still running at about the same level as before the illegal declaration of independence, and represented about 40 per cent of Rhodesia's current export earnings. The Zambian Government were showing increasing reluctance to reduce their imports from Rhodesia without a guarantee that the interruption of supplies would not last for more than three months and that the United Kingdom Government would give additional support to the Zambian economy during that period. Against this background the memorandum considered four possible courses of action:—

(i) The use of force. It was assumed that this would continue to be ruled out, but it must be expected that President Kaunda and other African leaders would bring increased pressure to bear on the United Kingdom Government to use force if it could not be shown that sanctions would be effective within a short period.

(ii) Overt negotiations with the régime in Salisbury. There were no indications that the régime was prepared to contemplate negotiations on conditions which would be acceptable to the United Kingdom Government; any public initiative to open discussions would therefore appear to be a surrender to Mr. Smith.

(iii) The transfer of the problem to the United Nations. Renewed action by the

¹ As early as Feb 1966 Wilson had expressed concern that the Rhodesian oil embargo was being circumvented with increasing effectiveness. He was also disturbed to discover that Whitehall sources frequently under-played the gravity of the leakages—the official line was that 8,000 gallons a day were getting through when the actual figure in Feb was 35,000 gallons. According to the prime minister it was 'bad public relations to get the facts wrong'. All departments concerned with the oil embargo were instructed to maintain close contact with the Downing Street Press Office (CAB 164/68, no 8, minute by Wright, 16 Feb 1966).

United Nations would be inevitable if a tanker reached Beira and oil were pumped through the pipeline to the refinery in Rhodesia, and might well follow if the breach in the oil embargo by the land routes from South Africa and Mozambique continued at the present level. Action by the United Nations in these circumstances would, however, be different from a deliberate United Kingdom initiative to transfer our responsibility for dealing with the Rhodesian situation to the United Nations; this would be taken to be an admission of the failure of our policy and there would also be no assurance that United Nations action would be any more successful than we had been in bringing about the downfall of the illegal régime.

(iv) The maintenance of our present policy. In addition to any other measures which might be taken to increase the efficiency of sanctions it would be necessary to consider whether we should press Zambia to cut off or drastically reduce her imports from Rhodesia, with the consequences which this might have in terms of an increased commitment to support the Zambian economy and the effect on our own economy if a cut-off in supplies of coal and power from Rhodesia brought copper production in Zambia to a stop. Action would also be needed to stop the leaks in the oil embargo and for this purpose the most effective measure might be to bring renewed pressure to bear on the South African Government. If the South African Prime Minister responded favourably a further possibility would be to seek to induce him to use his influence with the régime in Salisbury in favour of a settlement on terms acceptable to the United Kingdom.

Broadly speaking, although sanctions were not working as rapidly as had at one time been hoped, they were exerting an appreciable effect on the Rhodesian economy and this might be expected to increase. The memorandum did not establish a case for abandoning sanctions and adopting an alternative policy. Before reaching final decisions it would be useful to consult the United Kingdom Delegate to the United Nations and the Special Commissioner for East and Central Africa.

The Foreign Secretary agreed that further pressure should be put on the South African Government to stop the supplies of oil reaching Rhodesia from South Africa. We should consult the United States Government and invite them to support us. An approach to the United Nations should, if possible, be delayed since once it had been made we should no longer be able to use it as a threat against South Africa. Moreover, there was no certainty that United Nations action would be effective and, if it failed, the United Nations would be discredited. It would also be advisable to hold the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers at an earlier date than July since this might relieve the pressure by African Governments for action in the United Nations.

In discussion there was general agreement that an approach should be made to Dr. Verwoerd, the South African Prime Minister, representing the certainty of United Nations action under Chapter VII of the Charter if the oil embargo continued to be breached by supplies from South Africa. Similar representations should be made to the Portuguese Government to stop oil supplies from Mozambique and they should also be pressed to prevent oil being pumped through the pipeline if a tanker reached Beira. The policy of sanctions need not yet be abandoned; there was still some doubt about the amount of oil reaching Rhodesia, especially from Mozambique, and the illegal régime might be deliberately exaggerating the supplies of oil reaching Rhodesia in the hope of embroiling the United Kingdom Government with South

Africa and Portugal. Admittedly, even if sanctions were fully effective in reducing the standard of living in Rhodesia this would not necessarily result in the overthrow of the illegal régime or in their willingness to negotiate a settlement on terms acceptable to the United Kingdom; but unless sanctions were made effective and the leaks in the oil embargo from South Africa and Mozambique were stopped, there would be no chance of our policy achieving these objectives.

It was suggested that we should not delay recourse to the United Nations and the imposition of mandatory economic sanctions under Chapter VII; the present policy of sanctions was generally believed to be ineffective and the United Kingdom Government were therefore becoming increasingly discredited; the burden on our balance of payments was already considerable, but the danger to the United Kingdom economy would be much more serious if there were a collapse in Zambia affecting our copper supplies. The best way to avoid these consequences would be to transfer responsibility to the United Nations. On the other hand, it was pointed out that United Nations action under Chapter VII would not necessarily be more effective against the illegal régime than our present policy. Moreover, it was unlikely that United Nations action could be confined to preventing oil reaching Rhodesia through Beira; it could lead to the imposition of an oil embargo against the whole of Southern Africa. This might well prove ineffective, but could result in economic war with South Africa, with disastrous results for the United Kingdom economy.

In further discussion the following points were also made:—

- (a) The jamming of broadcasts from Francistown was at least partially successful; we might consider the possibility of counter jamming designed to interrupt communications, such as the police radio network, in Rhodesia.
- (b) If Bechuanaland were compelled to apply economic sanctions against Rhodesia the effect in the territory would be very serious; it would therefore be important that Bechuanaland should be exempted from any mandatory resolution adopted by the United Nations.
- (c) Pressure was continuing to be applied on Lonrho to prevent oil being pumped from Beira through the pipeline, but in previous discussion Ministers had been doubtful about the proposal that a lease might be taken on the pipeline to prevent the transit of oil since the cost of doing so seemed likely to be too high. The latest indication from Lonrho, however, was that a lease might be obtained for £54,000 a month. If this figure were confirmed the proposal would merit further consideration.

Summing up the discussion, *the Prime Minister* said there was general agreement that the first step should be to put pressure on the South African Government to stop the leaks from South Africa in the oil embargo.² The Foreign Secretary might represent to the South African Ambassador that unless this was done action by the United Nations under Chapter VII would be inevitable. Similar representations should be made to the Portuguese Government, with particular emphasis on the

² Sir Hugh Stephenson, the British ambassador in Pretoria (1963–1966), reported on 17 May there was ‘no real prospect that the South Africans will in fact take steps to curb the flow of oil products to Rhodesia, as long as we are having talks with the Rhodesian regime. There is certainly no chance of their doing this on any scale that would be helpful to us in New York [at the UN] or in the Commonwealth Sanctions Committee’. The South Africans took their stand on the principle of non-interference and non-participation in trade boycotts (PREM 13/1140, tel 470 to FO, 17 May 1966).

need to prevent oil being sent through the pipeline to Rhodesia if a tanker reached Beira. We should at the same time consult the United States Government and invite them to support our representations to the South African and Portuguese Governments. If a tanker reached Beira action in the United Nations would be inevitable and there were in any case arguments that recourse to the United Nations might now be in our best interest. If the matter came to the United Nations we should aim in the first instance at a resolution under Chapter VII, making the oil embargo mandatory and providing for a small naval force, preferably without United Kingdom participation, to prevent oil supplies reaching Beira. If the South African Government refused to comply with the resolution and enforce the embargo, a further resolution might be adopted imposing a control over the level of oil shipments to South Africa. If this did not prove effective it might be necessary to impose an oil embargo against the whole of Southern Africa. The United Kingdom delegate to the United Nations and the Special Representative in East and Central Africa should be asked to return urgently for consultations and a further meeting might be held on 6th April to consider, in particular, the questions of action in the United Nations and of Zambian trade with Rhodesia.

The Committee:—

- (4) Invited the Foreign Secretary to make representations to the South African and Portuguese Governments on the lines indicated by the Prime Minister in his summing up, and to seek the support of the United States Government for our action.
- (5) Invited the Foreign Secretary and the Commonwealth Secretary respectively to request the United Kingdom Delegate to the United Nations and the Special Commissioner for East and Central Africa to return urgently for consultation.
- (6) Invited the Paymaster General to consider the possibility of jamming radio communications in Rhodesia.
- (7) Invited the Commonwealth Secretary, in consultation with the Minister of Power, to have further discussions with the Directors of Lonrho about measures to prevent oil being pumped through the pipeline from Beira, including the possibility of a lease of the pipeline if this could be obtained at reasonable cost.
- (8) Agreed to resume their discussion on 6th April.

213 PREM 13/1120

5 May 1966

'The Rhodesia talks': minute by Sir B Trend to Mr Wilson on talks with Rhodesian officials in Salisbury

[In Jan 1966 Lord Alport, a Conservative peer and former minister of state at the CRO (1959–1961) and high commissioner to the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (1961–1963), visited Salisbury at the request of the prime minister. The purpose was to discuss with Sir H Gibb, the governor, how constitutional government might be restored once the illegal regime had been overthrown. Communication was still possible with Gibb but not consultation. Briefing Alport on 8 Jan before he left London, Wilson made clear there could be no negotiations with the Smith regime: 'The idea that we could take up where we left off on November 10 was ruled out.' The prime minister explained that with four constituencies to satisfy—British public opinion, Rhodesian opinion, African and Commonwealth opinion, and world opinion—it would not be easy for Britain to manage the Rhodesian problem. He believed that once the Smith government had been removed,

progress towards majority rule would be slow and measured 'not by time but achievement'. Wilson wanted Alport, who thought Smith and his colleagues would ultimately 'retire over the border to South Africa', to take the temperature in Salisbury ahead of the Lagos meeting of Commonwealth prime ministers (PREM 13/115). On 28 Mar 1966, three days before an election in Britain at which the Labour government was returned with an overall majority of just under 100, Wilson revealed that N D Watson, an assistant under-secretary of state at the CRO (see 211, note 2), had been in Salisbury during preceding weeks. The ostensible purpose of Watson's visit had been to deal with a threat to expel Fingland, the high commissioner, for alleged spying activities. Watson was told by Rhodesian officials it was too late to hold talks with the British government, a point confirmed by Smith at a press conference on 27 Mar. But Smith was clearly awaiting the outcome of the UK election, and his line afterwards was that he had never laid down any preconditions for talks; (he did, however, reassure his European supporters he would not surrender their independence. Wilson for his part announced on 27 Apr that informal talks would be held between British and Rhodesian officials to see if a basis for negotiation genuinely existed. The prime minister claimed, somewhat disingenuously, that the success of the limited measures taken by the UK to enforce the oil embargo (see 212), had left Smith with no alternative but to explore peace. His claim overlooked the fact that oil was still reaching Rhodesia. Wilson had also abandoned one of his own preconditions for the opening of talks—that there would first have to be a return to legality. The talks were conducted on the British side by Oliver Wright and officials from the CRO (Watson was still involved) and FO; in Salisbury J Hennings had replaced Fingland as high commissioner. For the Rhodesians the talks were conducted by Sir C Greenfield, chief economic adviser; G Clarke, Smith's secretary; and S Morris, chairman of the Public Service Board. The 'talks about talks' opened in London on 9 May and continued intermittently in Salisbury from early June until the end of Aug. In this minute Sir B Trend assesses Smith's motives, and how the British government might respond.]

I think that, if I were Smith, reflecting in Salisbury on what I have just done, I should be reasoning with myself on some such lines as the following:—

'In approaching the British Government via the Governor, I have just taken a substantial risk i.e. the risk of being overthrown by my own right wing. But it was a calculated risk, which I believe was worth taking for two reasons. First, all my people tell me that, although we are not doing too badly (particularly as regards oil), the British sanctions are inflicting increasing damage on the Rhodesian economy. Even if they are right, this is not necessarily decisive, since we are basically an agricultural economy and we can always revert, if necessary, to living off the land. But that would mean that a good deal of white capital and skilled industrial white labour would gradually leave Rhodesia; and what would remain would be the hard core of farmers and produce merchants who are, by and large, the most extreme and unreasonable element in the population, on which I least want to have to rely. This is not a pleasant prospect; and, if I can anticipate developments of this kind, I must obviously try to do so. Second, I suspect that, if I choose this moment to renew contacts with the British, I shall put the British Government in something of a spot. They can hardly refuse to talk to me in view of the pressure of public opinion in their own country. Moreover, they are probably increasingly worried about the slowness with which sanctions are working and the complication of Zambia (on which I have, in Kariba, an ultimate stranglehold). But if, for these reasons, they do talk to me, I shall be able, with luck, to manage things in such a way that we never actually confront that awkward point at which it is necessary to decide whether or not "talks" are to be followed by genuine "negotiations". Moreover, during the

whole of this period, the steam will be going out of sanctions. The British are having increasing difficulty in maintaining international support for the economic measures which they have taken; and there are a good many people all over the world who will be only too anxious, once talks have started, to refuse to believe that they can fail and to say, in effect, "Thank Heaven for that; and now the sooner we get back to normal business, the better". But once the momentum behind sanctions has fallen away, the British will never really be able to remount the operation; and I can therefore hope, again with luck, to steer things along to a point at which it will dawn on the British that it is too late to revert to a policy of sanctions and that the only choice left to them is between settling with me on my terms or using force; and I do not believe that they will ever use force. Finally, I have a powerful card in the person of the Governor. I have now got him on my side; and he is committed to making the talks succeed. The British will surely think twice before they risk losing him—as they will if they stop "talks" from developing into "negotiations".

But the British, too, will be thinking on much the same lines, only the other way round. And their hands are heavily tied by their various public statements about the kind of settlement which they could accept. They will therefore try to avoid walking into the trap which I am spreading for them; they will be quite prepared to let the talks drag on, or even to break them off for a time, in the hope that after another month or so sanctions will bite even deeper; and they will be very anxious to limit the initial talks to purely procedural questions and to make me do something which they call "return to constitutional rule" before they are willing to discuss any questions of substance about independence and the nature of a new constitution. This does not suit me at all, since I cannot afford to make any move in the direction of "returning to constitutional rule" until I am reasonably sure that the other side of the bargain, i.e. the content of the ultimate settlement, is something which I can persuade the great bulk of Rhodesian public opinion to accept—even if, in order to do so, I have to jettison my right wing (as I am quite prepared to, at the right time and on the right conditions). I must therefore involve the British in the substance of the problem, as distinct from procedural questions, at as early a stage in the forthcoming talks as I possibly can in the hope that I can thereafter string them along until they imperceptibly pass the point of no return'.

If Smith is really thinking on some such lines as these, he is, of course, deceiving himself to some extent. In particular he is ignoring the whole of the international (including United Nations) aspect of the problem and is underrating the pressures of this kind which could be mobilised against him, via ourselves, in certain circumstances. Nevertheless, if the above is at all a reasonable rationalisation of what Smith is trying to do, it illustrates the main risk which faces us in the forthcoming talks i.e. the risk, which the Cabinet immediately spotted as soon as you took them into your confidence, that non-committal talks will pass into substantive negotiations without anybody's quite realising how, when and where the dividing line was crossed. And it is this dilemma which underlies both the memorandum which we are to discuss at the R(X) meeting and the forebodings of Malcolm

MacDonald in Lusaka telegram No. 2102 of 4th May¹ (on which you have suggested that a Ministerial visit to Zambia may be necessary).

If we are to stick to what we have said about the content of the preliminary talks, they will be confined to an exploration to establish whether a basis for negotiation exists. But it will be difficult, if not impossible, to be reasonably sure whether this is so or not unless we are prepared to discuss, at least to some extent, the content of the final settlement *at this opening stage*. Our only means of escaping this dilemma seem to me to lie in refusing to deal with Smith on this basis and in making it clear that, while we are prepared to deal bilaterally with him on such questions as the modalities of the return to constitutional rule and the composition of an interim government, we consider that the content of the ultimate settlement must be dealt with on a multilateral basis i.e. it must, in some sense, be put into commission. This will be very unpalatable to Smith and perhaps even more so to the Governor. Nevertheless, I believe that it is the only course which we can safely adopt. I believe also that only if we are ready to let it be publicly known at an early stage that this is the course which we are going to adopt will it be possible for us to convince African and international opinion that the initial talks are really being directed to no more than ascertaining whether a basis for genuine negotiations exists.

Against this background paragraph 16 of R(X)(66)2 suggests the basis on which our spokesmen should try to play the hand on the first round. And it probably represents the best opening gambit which we can devise. But even this cautious approach has to concede that, at the second stage (i.e. a Ministerial confrontation) it may be necessary to discuss the possibility of putting the problem into commission or adopting some form of mediation procedure. And since (if the initial talks go well) we may reach this second stage relatively quickly, we ought to consider now whether it will indeed be our policy to 'collectivise' the substantive problem in some sense (notwithstanding the virtually certain objections of Smith and the Governor) or whether we intend to try to battle the whole thing right through by bilateral negotiations with Smith (with such help as we can get from Beadle's ingenuity!).²

¹ In this tel sent from Lusaka, MacDonald warned that in beginning unofficial talks over Rhodesia, 'our main problem in the Commonwealth in East and Central Africa is Kaunda'. The Zambian president had been 'appalled at the sudden, unheralded announcement by the Prime Minister of the secret conversations which had already taken place with Smith in Salisbury, and of the proposed further talks. His shock at this development was all the greater because he first heard of it from his radio set as he sat listening to the news'. Kaunda's 'greatly agitated frame of mind' had been stimulated by the additional news that seven African nationalists had been killed by the Rhodesian armed forces immediately after the announcement of the impending talks. To reassure Kaunda, and his fellow African leaders in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, it was vital according to MacDonald so to conduct the talks that they could not be construed 'as having slipped into negotiations for an ultimate settlement with the rebel Smith prior to a return to constitutional government in Rhodesia' (DO 207/5).

² Sir H Beadle, chief justice of Rhodesia. Wilson did not wholly trust him. When he briefed Alport on 8 Jan, the prime minister described Beadle as having 'the courage of a lion' but also 'the smartness of a fox' (PREM 13/1115).

214 FCO 36/14, no 11

27 May 1966

[ZANU]: CRO record of a meeting at Lusaka between Mrs Hart and representatives of ZANU¹

Opening the meeting, the *Minister of State* said that she thought it was important that the British Government should carry on a dialogue with ZANU whenever opportunity occurred. She proposed to make a statement on the British Government's present policies, motives and aims, after which she would invite Mr. Chitepo and his colleagues to comment and raise any other matters which they might want to.

2. The *Minister of State* said that she recognised that ZANU profoundly distrusted Britain at the present time. The main accusations which ZANU would no doubt level against Britain were that we were quite wrong not to have used force when u.d.i. was declared; that sanctions were not working and never would work; and that in view of the informal talks it was now clear that we were preparing to sell-out to Mr. Smith. ZANU would accordingly conclude that they must now take the struggle for African rights into their own hands and fight on alone in whatever way seemed best.

3. The *Minister of State* said that she hoped nevertheless that however much suspicion ZANU had of British actions, there would be no distrust of our motives. She knew that she spoke for the whole British Government and for the Prime Minister in particular, when she said that we were utterly determined to achieve a Rhodesia which was free for Africans and in which majority rule prevailed. The British Government believed that non-violent methods were more effective than force, and that in any situation loss of life—and particularly of innocent lives—should be avoided if this was humanly possible. We had, therefore, embarked on a new sort of war, an economic war of a kind and on a scale which had never been tried before. It was true that sanctions had not worked as quickly as we had hoped they would, especially the oil embargo. It was also true that the ordinary white man in the street had not been much affected yet. But all the recent evidence from Rhodesia suggested quite irrefutably that sanctions were now bearing very hard on the Rhodesian economy and that with every week that passed they were biting deeper and harder and causing increasing anxiety among Mr. Smith's supporters. Industrial activity had already declined by 25%, white unemployment was growing, the tobacco sales had failed almost completely and the influential business community was now very worried. The fact that the rebels were prepared to talk to British officials reflected the degree to which sanctions were working.

4. On the talks, the *Minister of State* emphasised that they would only result in negotiations if there was a prior return to constitutional rule, and that negotiations would only take place on the basis of the six principles. Negotiations were necessary because the kind of war we had embarked upon was aimed at achieving, not a military victory and the ruin for Rhodesia which might result, but a complete change in the minds and hearts of the European population. Any negotiations and any settlement would be on the British Government's terms alone; we would not yield an inch on any of our declared principles.

¹ The meeting was held at the home of Miss D M S D Park, first secretary, British High Commission, Lusaka. ZANU was represented by H Chitepo (acting president), H Hamadziripi, W Malianga (editor, ZANU reviews), E Rusike, J Mataure.

5. The *Minister of State* said that in this kind of war the opinions of the world mattered a great deal. Public opinion in Britain mattered very much. She could not let this occasion go by without emphasizing the British Government's condemnation of terrorist activities in Rhodesia, which she understood—although they would correct her if she were wrong about this—to have been carried out by ZANU. They had damaged the image of the Rhodesian nationalists in Britain, and were therefore a cause for much concern. *Mr. Washington Malianga* broke in excitedly with a demand that the Minister withdraw the word 'terrorist' as applied to ZANU's activities. His demand was taken up by his colleagues including Mr. Chitepo and a rowdy scene ensued. Raising her voice above the hubbub the *Minister of State* made it clear that if ZANU was responsible for the killing of innocent people, the British Government deplored this utterly. It was useless action in present circumstances, it inflamed public opinion against the nationalists everywhere and it made Britain's task much more difficult. *Mr. Malianga* said that the Minister was quite wrong to call 'our people' terrorists. This was an abusive term and implied that the Zimbabwe Nationalists struggling for their freedom were mere bloodthirsty savages. Why hadn't we described any of the Smith regime's killings of Africans as terrorism? Why hadn't we condemned Smith as a terrorist after the seven Africans had been killed at Sinoia? The *Minister of State* said that she condemned any killing of innocent people—this was the British Government's position. She defined 'innocent people' in Rhodesia as members of the public who, though they might support Mr. Smith politically, were not members of the regime and did no injury to anybody.

6. The rowdy argument continued for about half an hour, with the members of ZANU, led by Mr. Malianga, repeatedly demanding that the Minister withdraw the word 'terrorist' and the Minister repeatedly refusing to do so unless ZANU could convince her that their activities did not constitute the killing of innocent people. The Minister of State was assailed from all sides by Mr. Chitepo's colleagues, who frequently threatened with dramatic flourishes to close the meeting and walk out. She gave her hecklers every bit as good as she got.

7. When his colleagues allowed him to get a word in edgeways *Mr. Chitepo*—who alone always spoke calmly, courteously and rationally to the Minister—rehearsed the reasons why ZANU would have to close the meeting without further discussion if the Minister would not withdraw the word 'terrorist'. He stressed that we had never condemned the rebel regime for being terrorists, while we had seemed to be only too eager to use this term of the nationalists. For example, in the House of Commons the Commonwealth Secretary had deplored the Hartley murders² while there had been no word of condemnation for the killing of the seven Africans at Sinoia. (This difference in H.M.G.'s public attitude as reflected in Ministers' remarks in the House of Commons had clearly greatly embittered all the ZANU representatives.) *Mr. Chitepo* also disputed that Mr. and Mrs. Viljoen (the couple who were killed at Hartley) were in fact 'innocent' describing them as well-known to be strong supporters of Mr. Smith. To describe the activities of the Zimbabwe Nationalists in the present circumstances as 'terrorism' was most insulting and abusive.

8. At length the *Minister of State* said that ZANU's methods and arguments reminded her of Trotskyites. They were not impressing her with their socialism. Contempt and scorn was expressed for the Minister of State's 'so-called Socialism'.

² A European farmer and his wife were shot dead near Hartley, south-west of Salisbury, on 17 May.

The *Minister of State* offered to get round the sticking point by withdrawing the word 'terrorist' temporarily, while reserving the right to reinstate it if by the end of the meeting ZANU had not convinced her that their activities did not involve the killing of innocent people. *Mr. Malianga* and his colleagues forced *Mr. Chitepo* to reject this solution and accused the Minister of trying to 'divide and rule' the ZANU representatives by driving a wedge between them and *Mr. Chitepo*. *Mr. Chitepo* might be their Chairman but they were in charge of him and not the reverse, since the will of the people prevailed in ZANU. The *Minister of State* said that she would make a final offer which was to withdraw the word 'terrorist' in the interests of continuing the meeting, while substituting the words 'killing of innocent people'. *Mr. Malianga* cried 'No Substitution', a slogan which was quickly taken up by his colleagues. But *Mr. Chitepo* asserted himself and at last managed to shake this troublesome bee out of his colleagues' bonnets. (*Note.* Throughout the proceedings it was clear that *Mr. Chitepo* was the only ZANU representative who really wanted to hold rational discussion with *Mrs. Hart*, but that—evidently feeling his own personal position to be weak—he felt obliged to defer to the demands of his colleagues even to the extent of agreeing with their most extreme arguments.)

9. After referring to the statement made by the Minister of State at the beginning of the meeting, *Mr. Chitepo* said that ZANU had not particularly wished to meet her in Lusaka. *Mr. Chitepo* had met the Minister in London a few weeks ago and he had nothing new to say. Any developments since that meeting had been wrong developments, e.g. the talks. However, ZANU had decided to accept the Minister's invitation since they thought that she might have had something new to say to them. This apparently was not so.

10. The *Minister of State* said that she had already emphasised her view, which was that a continuing dialogue between H.M.G. and ZANU and ZAPU was very necessary. The fact that *Mr. Smith* was talking to us meant that it was now possible that he would settle on our terms, which were the six principles. *Mr. Chitepo* enquired about the 6th principle. The *Minister* explained that this had been added to our original five principles; it was designed, quite frankly, to offer the Europeans an additional guarantee that their rights as a minority would be respected in any constitutional settlement. *Mr. Chitepo* accepted that the principle was a reasonable one and his colleagues did not dissent.

11. *Mr. Chitepo*, with support from his colleagues, alleged that it was H.M.G. and not *Mr. Smith* who had initiated the talks. The *Minister of State* firmly denied this. She said that ZANU might disagree about our methods, but there was really no reason for them to entertain a basic distrust of the British Government's motives and intentions. Sanctions were working and we would continue to enforce and strengthen them until they did work. *Mr. Chitepo* said that history showed that the longer an unconstitutional regime managed to survive, the greater the chance that the world would accept its existence and in time recognise it. Sanctions could not be enforced indefinitely and ZANU suspected that the British Government were waiting for a time when other countries had got tired of supporting Britain in enforcing sanctions. The *Smith* regime would then achieve international acceptance. The *Minister of State* agreed that sanctions could not be kept going indefinitely. She referred to Lord Caradon's speech in the Security Council on 19th May, when Lord Caradon said that if it was not possible to achieve a just settlement as a result of the efforts now being made, a new situation would arise and we should need to consider the whole problem further.

12. *Mr. Chitepo* said it was clear to him that Britain was preparing to wash her hands of Rhodesia. Sanctions so far had been a complete failure. As an illustration that this was not true *Mrs. Hart* referred to the tobacco sales—only perhaps 20–30% of this year's crop had been sold. *Mr. Chitepo* said that his information was that almost the entire crop had been sold. Moreover the British Government appeared to be turning a blind eye to the fact that firms within its own control were disregarding the sanctions. It was well known that B.P. was supplying oil to Rhodesia over Beit Bridge. The *Minister of State* said that no P.O.L. was supplied to Rhodesia by B.P. as far as we knew. If ZANU had good evidence and would let her have it, she would investigate. *Mr. Chitepo* scoffed. Surely the British Government knew exactly who was breaking the embargo. Was M.I. 5 not represented in Salisbury? The *Minister of State* said that we had our sources of information.

13. *Mr. Hamadziripi* said that the nationalists had completely lost faith in the British Government. *Mr. Malianga* shouted that the African people in Rhodesia must be their own liberators. This was as true of Rhodesia as it had been of anti-imperialist struggles in other parts of Africa. Britain was a small country and did not count nowadays. ZANU were the heirs of George Washington and would fight alone.

14. *Mr. Chitepo* said that it was clear that there was no common ground between ZANU and the British Government. Since Britain had in the past managed to reach a measure of agreement with other African nationalist leaders—for example Nkrumah, Abubakar, Kenyatta—it was clear that the British Government's attitude to African nationalism had been twisted by the presence of the Europeans in Rhodesia. We were conniving at the rebellion because fundamentally we did not want to let down our kith and kin. ZANU regarded themselves as at war with the Smith regime. Their differences with Britain were not just differences of method but differences in the final objective.

15. The *Minister of State* emphasised again that the only difference was one of method. What divided the British Government and ZANU was that we distrusted ZANU's methods while ZANU distrusted our objectives. But there was no difference in the ultimate aim which was a Rhodesia in which the Africans were free.

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17 June 1966

[Rhodesia and the battle for black Africa': despatch from M MacDonald (Nairobi) to Mr Bottomley¹

The battle for Africa is now vigorously engaged. Perhaps paradoxically, the most important protagonists struggling on this continental battlefield are not so much the Africans themselves as the Western Democracies on one side and the Communist Powers on the other (including not only Russia and China, but also Eastern Europe and Cuba). With few exceptions the Africans are unwilling parties in this 'cold war', wishing to be left in peace to proceed with building the greater well-being of their new, under-developed nations, assisted by whatever help any of the developed nations in either ideological camp will give them on fair and friendly terms. But they are more or less helpless victims of the struggle between the two rival groups of major

¹ This was MacDonald's first despatch as British special representative in East and Central Africa.

Powers, which unhappily is not being waged only among themselves, but has been inflicted also on numerous small peoples first in Asia and now in Africa as well. Vietnam (both North and South) is suffering the most tragic sample of that infliction.

2. In an article published in *The Observer* in 1961 I wrote, 'I wonder whether we are not at present attaching too much importance to Africa in comparison to Asia. Of course, Africa has a distinct and urgent significance of its own. No one in his senses would try to belittle the risk of affairs going grievously, and even disastrously wrong there; and it is right that we should take infinite pains to pursue wise courses and give every practical help that we can there. Nevertheless, what happens in Africa during the present generation will not necessarily have a decisive effect on what happens to the whole human race over the next few centuries—whereas what happens in Asia in the next decade or two will (I think) very likely do that.' This was my opinion before I ever set foot in Africa (beyond an occasional day in Cairo on my fleeting ways between the Orient and the Occident), and when I was ignorant of 'darkest Africa'; but after a few years here I think the statement is generally correct. The future of humanity will be settled by the outcome of the rivalries between the powers-that-be in North America, northern Asia and Europe; and what happens in Africa is by comparison of little importance. Nevertheless, since 1961 several new African nations have become independent, the Africans' collective influence in the United Nations Organisation has been considerably increased, and their enforced part in the 'cold war' may have a distinct effect one way or the other on the final result of the power struggle between the principal peoples on those other continents.

3. In the last several months Chinese and Russian efforts at subversion in certain regions of Africa have suffered reverses. Mr. Chou En-lai's² statement in Dar-es-Salaam almost exactly a year ago that 'Africa is ripe for revolution' has been followed by a series of events in various African lands which could only be described in his jargon as 'counter-revolutions'. In several French ex-colonies, and in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya and some other countries changes of Government or shifts of power have occurred which have reduced Communist influences there, and have in some cases even caused the expulsion of Chinese and Russian diplomats, advisers and busy-bodies. The latest happenings in Uganda may be more agreeable to Communist than to Western interests; but on balance developments in various parts of Africa during the last year have been reassuring.

4. So the friends of the West could feel somewhat encouraged—were it not for one other recent event which could reverse the present trend, causing a grave defeat for the West and a significant revival of influence for the Communists in all but southern Africa. That event is the act of crass folly by Mr. Ian Smith and his colleagues in Salisbury last November when they declared Rhodesia's so-called 'independence' under a minority white racialist Government. If Britain can effectively defeat their rebellion within a tolerable period of time, and restore constitutional government in Salisbury under conditions which will lead to uninterrupted progress towards majority rule in the not too distant future, then British (and Western) prestige throughout not only black and brown but also white Africa will be distinctly enhanced; but if Britain fails, and a compromise agreement is reached with Smith which in the judgment of responsible black African leaders favours the whites against the blacks, and so betrays the principle of democratic

² Prime minister of the People's Republic of China, 1949–1976.

racial equality, then Britain's (and perhaps also the West's) reputation could be gravely crippled for a long time to come. China and Russia would then exploit the situation to increase their sinister influences among Africa's tumultuous, emotional black multitudes.

II

5. Time is slipping by. More than seven months have already elapsed since IDI was proclaimed in Salisbury. The scepticism of many Africans about the effectiveness of Britain's policy for overthrowing the rebel régime by economic sanctions, and even about our sincerity in truly wishing to overthrow it, has swollen to formidable proportions. Their collective patience would almost certainly have become exhausted before this were it not that in the meantime certain dramatic demonstrations of some black Africans' incompetence, and occasional barbarism, in Government have restrained the more responsible African leaders. The series of recent *coups d'état*, accompanied by the bloody events in Nigeria, Congo (Leopoldville), Uganda³ and elsewhere, have made those wiser men self-consciously ashamed of their own race's shortcomings, and have caused most of them to be less outspoken in criticism of our handling of the Rhodesian crisis than they would otherwise by now have been. But the effects of this mood could work both ways. Their awareness of these African failings could make some of them anxious to divert attention from that unpleasant feature to our alleged mistakes in Rhodesia. There are dangerous signs that the impatience of the African Governments as a whole is moving towards explosion. President Kaunda's recent outbursts are the most vicious signs of that—and Zambia's close, dangerous economic and political relationship to the Rhodesian crisis lends him an important strategic influence over his black brothers' sentiments on this question.

6. The Africans' concern has been increased by the opening of the 'talks about talks' between British and Rhodesian officials. Although the wiser among them agree that we were right to enter at least tentatively and cautiously into those talks, their trust in our judgment and sincerity has been so shaken by our failure to overthrow the rebels by now that they are inclined to be suspicious. They remember our vehement public denunciations of Smith personally in the early days of the crisis; and they now contrast these with our readiness to hold lengthy secret discussions with official representatives of that untrustworthy rebel. They are half-fearful that the artful Smith will out-manoeuvre us into a position of fatal compromise.

7. I hope that we are in fact moving towards the end of the rebellion, and that economic sanctions will before long do such serious damage in Rhodesia that the present talks between officials open the way to a satisfactory settlement. There will, of course, be many difficulties in negotiating that settlement on terms satisfactory to black African opinion. I need not go into detail about all those difficulties; but I should mention a few points which will probably be of crucial importance in the most influential African leaders' judgments. If these points are adequately met, I believe the other difficulties can be overcome.

³ For Nigeria, see 372, note 1. The reference to Uganda is to the coup of May–June 1966 when Uganda troops stormed the palace of the president, Sir Edward Mutesa, the Kabaka of Buganda, see 83 note, and 383, note 2.

8. The first point is that we must adhere firmly to our oft-repeated announcement that we shall not negotiate with the rebel régime. This is vital, especially as it involves Britain's honour. If there is any serious suggestion that our officials are concerned not so much with an insistent exploration of how constitutional government can be restored in Salisbury, as with the detailed working out of a future Constitution for Rhodesia which might be regarded as in any committal way binding on Her Majesty's Government in the subsequent negotiations with a broader, properly qualified team of Rhodesian representatives, then even our best friends in black Africa will regard that as a betrayal. We must be extremely careful to avoid such a situation.

9. This problem of the present talks with Rhodesian officials, who are in effect the delegates of Smith, raises the question of Smith himself perhaps being included in the negotiating team at a later stage. As I have already indicated, the Africans universally regard him as the arch-rebel who was primarily responsible for the act of criminal folly in declaring IDI. Therefore they will be potentially extremely critical, suspicious and hostile towards any suggestion that negotiations should take place with him, among others, after the restoration of constitutional rule. It is no use our trying to argue with them that there are many precedents for Her Majesty's Government negotiating with rebel leaders in similar circumstances in other lands—such as with Collins and De Valera in Ireland, Gandhi and Nehru in India, Bustamante and others in the West Indies, and Nkrumah, Kenyatta, Kaunda, Banda⁴ and several more in Africa—because they will reply that there can be no comparison whatever between those leaders and Smith. They will say (with justice) that the former were leaders of national majorities seeking independence for their united peoples, whereas he is the leader of a racist minority seeking to deny national freedom to the majority of people in their and his homeland. And recalling British Ministers' strong public denunciations of his unreliability as well as other faults only a few months ago, they will be inclined to lose respect for the British Government if it now deals with this particular 'rebel and traitor' to The Queen. They think he should be treated more or less as such, not advocating that he should be executed on Tower Hill or strung up on a tree in Salisbury—or even imprisoned, as all of them were—but that he should be forced out of office, and then ignored.

10. I do not know what Her Majesty's Government's intentions regarding Smith are. From many points of view, in addition to that of our interests in Africa, it will of course be best if he is forced to surrender, to quit office, and to resign the leadership of the white Rhodesians to a more sensible man. But even after the defeat of his rebel régime he may continue to be the most effective white chief in Rhodesia—and it may well turn out to be prudent to include him among the negotiators. I can only say that if there are to be negotiations with him as one member of a group of important, representative Rhodesian individuals, we shall have to make a very special effort to justify this on pragmatic grounds. Such grounds might appeal to many sensible

⁴ Michael Collins (first prime minister of Irish Free State, Jan 1922, assassinated, Aug 1922) and Eamon de Valera (Irish prime minister, 1932–1948, 1951–1954, 1957–1959, and president, 1959–1973); Mahatma Gandhi (Indian nationalist leader, assassinated, 1948) and Jawaharlal Nehru (prime minister of India, 1947–1964); Alexander Bustamante (prime minister and minister of external affairs and defence, Jamaica, 1962–1967); Dr Kwame Nkrumah (first president of Ghana, 1957–Feb 1966, overthrown while on a visit to Peking); Dr Hastings Banda (prime minister of Nyasaland, 1963–1966, and president, from 1966, of Malawi).

Africans, for one of their good qualities is that they are generally realists who are ready to accept, however reluctantly, undeniable facts. So they may be partially impressed if—in the circumstances envisaged—we could convey to them privately the following reasons for including Smith among the negotiations:—

(a) Last November he was in fact a member of the minority in the Rhodesian Cabinet who voted against the declaration of IDI, and who only subsequently supported it out of loyalty to the principle of collective Cabinet responsibility in a crisis. He has therefore always been half inclined to end the rebellion when opportunity offered.

(b) His popularity with an overwhelming majority of the Europeans in Rhodesia makes him the most effective political leader of that section of the population, and the only man who can swing them away from racist extremism into other courses. It is essential that they should be so swung if the well-being of Rhodesia's people as a whole (blacks as well as whites) is to be preserved, for this requires that Rhodesia shall be an inter-racial State in which Europeans and Africans co-operate constructively together. So Smith, with all his admitted and occasionally despicable faults, can be a vital influence in achieving the transition to that co-operation. Indeed, it could be a turning point in Rhodesian and Central African history if he can be induced to persuade the Europeans to accept uninterrupted progress towards reasonably early majority rule. And any alternative may be disastrous, not only for Africans and Europeans alike in Rhodesia, but also for the preservation of President Kaunda's cherished inter-racial State in Zambia.

(c) He has accepted as a condition of his being admitted to the negotiations that his rebel régime shall come to an end, and that a new constitutional Government, with representatives of the Africans as well as the Europeans included as Ministers, shall be established.

11. Even with these arguments it would be very difficult—and probably impossible in some cases—to persuade the African leaders that we were right to negotiate with Smith in person; and it would be impossible to do so if extreme racist reactionaries like Mr. Dupont, Mr. Lardner-Burke and His Grace the Duke of Montrose⁵ were to be members of the reconstituted constitutional Government. They must be turned out; and in their places more liberal-minded European representatives must be taken into the team of negotiators.

12. Moreover, when the time comes for negotiations the African Heads of Governments will think it not only right but essential that truly representative African leaders shall take part in those negotiations. They will seek to insist that Nkomo and Sithole are included, as well as representatives of the present Parliamentary Opposition or other African groups in Rhodesia.

13. That brings me to the question of those negotiations themselves. We must of course continue to insist that their basis is the Six Principles.⁶ And we must not only stand firmly, but be clearly seen to be standing firmly, by them. The Africans attach importance to them all (including protection for the white minority under the Sixth Principle); but the most vital one from their point of view is the Fifth. African Heads

⁵ C W Dupont, was officer administering the government of Rhodesia in the Smith régime; D W Lardner-Burke was minister of justice and law and order; the Duke of Montrose was minister of defence and external affairs.

⁶ See 202, note 2, for the six principles.

of Government will judge our integrity mostly by our handling and interpretation of it. In their reckoning the opinion of 'the people of Rhodesia as a whole', if properly and fairly consulted, will be opposed to any grant of independence to Rhodesia except on or after the attainment of majority rule. Their reason for this is their view that if the Nationalist leaders in Rhodesia were at liberty to conduct peaceful political campaigning in the country, they would command a majority of African votes in ballot boxes. Nothing will persuade them to the contrary—except if they were to be proved wrong by a properly conducted referendum, or perhaps by some convincing alternative test of public opinion in Rhodesia. Otherwise any proposal to grant independence to a Government still controlled by the European minority will be absolutely unacceptable to them, however strong may be the guarantees of uninterrupted progress afterwards towards majority rule. We must recognise this fact if we are to maintain Britain's reputation as a champion of the principle of democratic racial equality in the world.

14. That opinion is held not only by the wilder, more extremist African politicians, but also by the wise leaders like President Kenyatta, Emperor Haile Selassie,⁷ the authorities in Nigeria and Ghana, President Nyerere in his calmer moods, perhaps Dr. Banda, Dr. Seretse Khama,⁸ and numerous others. These men would be ready to make various concessions on other aspects of the admittedly very difficult Rhodesian problem; but neither their own sincere political convictions, nor their consideration of political expediency for themselves in the light of general black African opinion, will alter their view that it would be utterly wrong for independence to be granted to a Government dominated by the white minority in Rhodesia. And if such a grant took place, their authority in their own countries would be jeopardised, for these wiser leaders are already being severely criticised for being too tolerant of Britain's policy towards Rhodesia. Thus, for example, such a settlement of the Rhodesian crisis could greatly help the Odinga Opposition⁹ and severely damage the Kenyatta Government in Kenya.

15. Moreover, if Her Majesty's Government were to consent to such a solution, some, and perhaps all the black African nations with the possible exceptions of Malawi and one or two others of lesser importance like Bechuanaland, would probably take their leave of the Commonwealth. Such a development would hurt severely not only that most promising of all inter-racial international companies in the contemporary world, but also the high prestige of its presiding genius, Great Britain.

16. This does not mean that the British Government should now state publicly that they cannot agree to independence for Rhodesia except under majority rule. The sagacious African leaders to whom I am referring (with the exception of President Nyerere) will understand that such an unqualified statement might be inopportune in the near future because of its unhelpful effect at this critical stage on European opinion in Rhodesia. But they will need satisfying that the means proposed for consulting 'the people of Rhodesia as a whole' will be fair and proper, such as by a referendum, or perhaps by a demonstrably impartially constituted Royal Commission.

⁷ Emperor of Ethiopia, 1930–1936, 1941–1974.

⁸ Bechuanaland became independent as the Republic of Botswana on 30 Sept 1966. Sir Seretse Khama (knighted 1966) was first president. See 293.

⁹ See 367, note 4.

17. As I wrote in my 'Note on Rhodesia' of 8 March, on related matters the responsible African leaders will be helpful. For example, they will favour a transition period after constitutional rule has been restored and before independence with majority rule is attained in Rhodesia. There may be differences of opinion among them about how long that transition period should last: President Kaunda in his present obstreperous mood, for instance (stimulated by his more extreme Cabinet colleagues), is likely to think it should continue for not more than about two years, whereas I believe that many of the others, including President Nyerere, think at least privately that a considerably longer period of years would be desirable. From various points of view it would in any case, of course, be a mistake to try to agree on any particular period of years, for whatever figure were mentioned would be criticised as too long by lots of people, and as too short by most of the others. I believe we could get general African consent (or at least acquiescence) to some formula about the transition period lasting as long as may be necessary to complete the experienced training of the Africans for majority rule. But then other provisions in the Constitution touching that training would have to demonstrate that its pace was going to be reasonably fast.

III

18. In conclusion let me add one more comment. Some opinion in Britain is, quite naturally, impatient with the Governments in black Africa because of the mistakes which their inexperience or immaturity in sophisticated modern Government cause some of them to make. And certain of those mistakes are indeed appalling. But if the Africans are (partly through no fault of their own) inexperienced in such matters, and sometimes childish or adolescent in their political behaviour, we must not respond immaturely and dismiss them and their sincere feelings as therefore beneath consideration. If I may say so as an observer on the spot in Africa, I for one greatly admire the way in which Ministers in London, in the midst of other harassing preoccupations and in the face sometimes of almost intolerable provocations by hard-pressed, emotional African leaders like President Kaunda, have patiently treated their conduct with understanding wisdom. And let us recognise, too, that the Africans have some grand elemental human qualities which are usually present in youngsters, but which often fail to survive in grown-ups; and that these are enabling them to set the world an example of good Government in certain important respects. They are, for instance, among the most naturally friendly people on earth, with little or no sense of racial discrimination except when it is provoked in them by a show of racial superiority in others. They believe so firmly in racial equality, and in the need for inter-racial fraternity and co-operation in contemporary human affairs, that (in the face of great difficulties resulting from recent historical causes) some of them have established inter-racial States under African majority rule in which there is non-discriminatory equality, good fellowship and collaboration between whites, browns and blacks alike. Such States now exist in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi, and will exist in Bechuanaland when it becomes independent later this year. In Kenya, Tanzania and Bechuanaland white-faced Ministers sit side by side with their black colleagues in the ruling Cabinets, and in Tanzania there are two brown-faced Asian Ministers as well. The quality of the inter-racial relationship varies to some extent from State to State; and it may not last in one or two of the

countries concerned, for reasons which I need not go into here. But in the others it will not only continue, but grow stronger—unless the rebels in Rhodesia now gain a victory for white minority racialism in Africa which makes it impossible for true statesmen like Kenyatta and Khama, and also Nyerere and Kaunda in their reasonable moods, to restrain a vicious anti-white reaction among their less responsible followers.

19. Indeed, these black African States are setting an example which we must hope will be followed in Rhodesia itself. That country's much larger and more important European population than exists in any of the countries north of the Zambezi makes it in the highest degree desirable that after a black African majority rules there European representatives shall continue to be Ministers, Members of Parliament and high officials in its Government. In fact, the black African-governed countries in the Commonwealth have established models for the right sort of future Government in Rhodesia, in contrast to the experiment in 'apartheid' now prevailing in South Africa.

20. I am circulating copies of this despatch to our Ambassador in Washington, our Representative at the United Nations in New York, our Ambassadors in Pretoria and Addis Ababa, and our High Commissioners in the independent Commonwealth countries in Africa. Since I have had no opportunity to discuss its contents with more than one or two of the latter, I hope they will all feel free to send to you, Sir, or to the Foreign Secretary in London any criticisms of it which they feel they should make, so that Her Majesty's Government is fully apprised of their advice on this important matter.

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28 July 1966

'Rhodesia: where do we go from here?': note by J O Wright to Mr Wilson

[In this note Wright argues the case for a settlement with the Smith regime upon the basis of independence before majority rule. In essence, the position of Britain was three-fold: (1) Rhodesia to be offered independence on the basis of the 1961 constitution amended to ensure, so far as was possible, unimpeded progress to majority rule, and to incorporate safeguards against retrogressive amendment. (2) Britain to insist that, if Smith accepted the proposals, they must be subject to approval by the Rhodesian people as a whole, their wishes to be determined by a Royal Commission. (3) Britain to insist that, if Smith accepted the proposals, negotiations would be conducted only with a broad-based government of national unity, formed by mandate from the governor; such a government could not be answerable to the existing parliament, dominated as it was by the Rhodesian Front (PREM 13/1123, Wright notes to Wilson, 29 June and 6 July 1966). Officials advising the government were divided over the proposals, and they also differed in their assessments of the likely impact on the Rhodesian situation of Britain's gathering economic difficulties. (On 20 July the government announced a prices and wages standstill, dividend curbs, a £100 million cut in overseas expenditure, and a £50 foreign travel limit.) According to Sir R Allen at the FO, Smith and his colleagues had long believed the UK was negotiating from weakness; Britain's economic crisis would therefore have a marginal effect only on Rhodesian attitudes. He did not think sanctions would ever produce a change in Rhodesia's political climate. The only option now was for the UK to reach 'the best settlement we could'. There would no doubt be a violent African reaction in some African countries and some might leave the Commonwealth. But attitudes would vary and 'the plain fact was that no solution was possible without disagreeable consequences'. Watson at the Commonwealth Office thought Britain's economic

differences would make a difference. They would increase the regime's confidence, 'with the consequence that there were no immediate prospects of a tolerable settlement'. Watson disagreed over sanctions policy having failed; 'all that could be said was that it had not yet succeeded'. Malcolm MacDonald continued to express concerns about the Commonwealth and he feared in particular a leak if the proposals were put to Smith ahead of the September meeting of prime ministers in London. Some African countries might leave the Commonwealth before the meeting assembled. Against this it was argued that if the proposals were introduced at the London meeting they would be bound to leak and ruin what chance there might be of a successful approach to Smith (CAB 130/463, REF 2(66), meeting of Small Group on Future Planning for Rhodesia, 26 July 1966). The prime minister commented on Wright's note, 'I shall want to discuss one or two other ideas too' (on which see the annex to 217) but in essence Wright's note set out the thinking of the British government in the approach to the *Tiger* talks with Smith.]

Ministers will be resuming their discussions on Rhodesia after your return from Washington. Since the pause in the talks in Salisbury, officials have, on your instructions, been giving very hard thought to this whole problem. Next week's meeting will therefore provide a good opportunity for Ministers to take stock and decide where we go from here. The problem remains, as always, appallingly intractable and multi-dimensional; but basically, as always, it boils down to questions of strategy and tactics.

Strategy

We have hitherto proceeded on the assumption that the task of finding a solution to the Rhodesia problem is primarily one for the British Government. All our efforts have been bent on maintaining international acceptance for British responsibility. At the same time we have consistently, both before and after UDI, maintained that a solution of the Rhodesian problem must be found within the context of the Five Principles; since UDI we have in addition insisted that there must be a return to legality before negotiations with Rhodesia can be resumed and we have added the Sixth Principle. We have ruled out the use of force and placed our reliance on economic sanctions.

Despite the eccentricities of the last Ministerial meeting nothing, it seems to me, has happened which calls for a basic review of our strategy.

Let us examine the essentials of this strategy one by one.

Tempting though it is for H.M.G., beset as they are by so many and great difficulties to turn over this problem to international society, such a confession of failure would be a great blow to our national prestige and difficult to reconcile with our desire to maintain a world role. If we cannot cope on our own with a couple of hundred thousand settlers, it will be said, what is our value in helping to contain China? Moreover, handing over the problem to the U.N. is not a valid option in the sense that it would relieve us of the consequences of failure to solve the problem on our own (Chapter VII against the whole of Southern Africa etc.).

Secondly, successive British administrations have held that the Five Principles are the right answer to the Rhodesian problem: they make sense in the context of the local Rhodesian situation and they are defensible to the British Parliament. The novelty of the offer of independence before majority rule is safeguarded by the requirement that the solution must be acceptable to the Rhodesian people as a whole. A solution on these terms has always been considered (i) right (ii) defensible. It still is.

I do not imagine that the use of force is any more acceptable to H.M.G. today than it was last year, or the year before.

So we pin our faith on sanctions. Here there is a difference of view between Mr. Watson and myself. The Commonwealth Secretary supports Mr. Watson's view. It is common ground between us that sanctions have already achieved a partial success in that they have caused Mr. Smith to talk. Where we differ is about the belief that the harder sanctions bite, the better the terms we shall be able to secure from Smith. This is a matter of judgment, not of demonstrable evidence and depends on a reading of R.F. psychology. As you know, I have consistently maintained since April that Smith was not come to Canossa;¹ and that while his preferred choice was agreement on independence with Britain, he still retained his option for continued rebellion and would prefer this to unacceptable terms such as over-rapid progress to majority rule. I also formed the view during the month we spent in Salisbury in June that economic sanctions were not having the desired political effect and were unlikely to do so; increased sanctions without the offer of a settlement which made sense in Smith's terms would only make the Rhodesians more pigheaded and prone to retreat into their laager; I remain of this view.

That such a retreat may well be the beginning of chaos in Rhodesia, with a decreasing number of whites trying to cope with an increasingly difficult security situation is beside the point. People do not always act in their own best interests. If we want a settlement we must bait the hook if we hope to land this fish.

It is true that the British economic situation has, externally at least, taken a turn for the worse. But this need not affect our basic strategy towards Rhodesia because, in my view, one way of demonstrating to Mr. Smith that we are not negotiating from weakness is to point out to him what is in fact true, that the British economic situation is in fact irrelevant to the solution of the Rhodesia problem; whether we like it or not we cannot weaken on the Six Principles or on the return to legality however much we might be tempted to do so for economic reasons. The best way to convince him that this is so is to proceed as officials originally recommended and present him with the very tough (to him) offer set out in Annex A of R(X)(66)7 of July 19.

A choice of evils

For the fact of the matter is, we have a choice of evils. There is little for our comfort in anything to do with the Rhodesian situation. The stocktaking that Ministers do will be of particular value if they can form a judgment on which they hold to be the lesser of the two evils.

The first of the evils concern the consequences that will flow from *success* in solving the Rhodesian problem, always within the context of the Six Principles etc. According to reports from our High Commissioners in various African territories the consequences of success on these terms would be likely to be very grave. They will vary from country to country. They will include resignations from the Commonwealth, likely in the case of Tanzania and Zambia, and quite possibly as a

¹ Canossa: a reference to the penance performed in 1077 by the excommunicated King Henry IV of Germany in the presence of Pope Gregory VII at Canossa, a castle in the foothills of the Apennines, about eighteen miles from Parma in Italy.

result of a chain reaction of solidarity from other African countries such as Uganda and even Nigeria. Resignation from the Commonwealth may or may not be accompanied by the rupture of diplomatic relations.

There might also be reprisals against British economic and other interests (the stoning of High Commissions is an occupational hazard of modern diplomatic service which can be disregarded) and if the Africans get really worked up about it, there might also be a danger to the safety of our kith and kin. On the other hand, the safeguard for us in a solution in these terms is the Fifth Principle: if it can be demonstrated that the solution we arrive at is genuinely acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole, then there ought to be a reasonable chance of calming down the more sensible Africans and obviating the less attractive possible consequences of success. In any case, we cannot surely give way to African blackmail and retain leadership of the Commonwealth.

This is not to say, of course, that there are not positive advantages to be derived from success; merely that with these advantages will come severe disabilities also. But among the positive advantages would be:—

- (i) the solution of perhaps the most difficult and intractable of all Britain's overseas problems.
- (ii) the relief on our balance of payments of something in the order of £50 million a year, a bull point for sterling.
- (iii) the possibility of getting race relations on a decent footing in Rhodesia and therefore perhaps the start of a reversal of what has seemed to be an inexorable tendency towards a black/white division of Africa along the Zambesi.
- (iv) the boost to the national ego which comes from the successful resolution of a difficult problem.

The consequences of *failure* to solve the Rhodesian problem are, to my mind, worse and could be disastrous; the advantages minimal. They were foremost in Ministers' minds in the spring of this year when there seemed to be no way out of the Rhodesia problem. It would be ironic if, now that there is such a prospect, however slight, of a way out, we should shy away from the consequences of success.

To begin with, it will be increasingly difficult in the event of failure to hold the strategic position, namely that this is a British responsibility and that we must find a solution within the context of the Six Principles. We shall be under increasing pressure within the Commonwealth and the United Nations to use force or else have the matter taken out of our hands. If the matter is once taken out of our hands there will be a steady pressure for an escalation of measures against the whole of Southern Africa; it will be very difficult for us to limit these to measures that we would consider tolerable (e.g. Chapter VII Resolution restricted to oil) but we would find it increasingly illogical and difficult to veto measures which we considered intolerable. I take it that we would not consider the humiliation of having recourse to Article 50 of the Chapter which entitles us to plead for relief if our economic interests are too severely damaged.

So far, Ministers have regarded this possibility—the probable loss of an investment worth about £1,000 million in South Africa and trade valued at about £400 million both ways—as too awful to contemplate. I imagine that they will not find it any more easy to contemplate in the present economic circumstances.

Moreover a particular feature of our trade with South Africa is that we have a very healthy favourable balance which South Africa very conveniently has to settle in gold. South Africa is our third largest market; exports last year were about £200,000,000.

Moreover, if we fail, we lose any chance of using Dr. Verwoerd's self-interest to bring the Rhodesia problem to an end.

Strategic conclusions

I think it follows almost inescapably from the foregoing that we must stick to our present policies because they are (i) right, (ii) in the national interest and (iii) consistent. To continue our present policies means in fact to go for the solution set out in Annex A of R(X)(66)7. At the same time we should be ready if we succeed with this strategy—and this is by no means certain—to deploy a major diplomatic effort in Africa and the other areas of the Commonwealth, to demonstrate the basic wisdom and good sense of these policies. It will be no use being half-heartedly apologetic about them.

Of course, we must also recognise that we have no guarantee of success. The strategy may fail; but we clearly ought to try to make it succeed.

Tactics

If this basic strategy is confirmed, there remains the question of tactics in the near future.

There are three main tactical hurdles to be overcome:—

- (1) The Parliamentary timetable,
- (2) The Prime Ministers' Conference, and
- (3) Our commitment to the Rhodesians both to resume before the end of July and also to put forward a definitive proposition.

As regards Parliament, you are committed to making a statement before Parliament rises in time to allow Parliament to have a debate on Rhodesia if they want. I imagine that Parliament will be critical if, after it has been announced in the communiqué that the talks will be resumed in Salisbury by the end of July, you have to make a Statement saying that the talks are not being resumed. This means that some activity will have to be taking place by the time you make your Statement. No one will quibble with a week or ten days' delay, but I expect questions will begin to be asked, particularly by Mr. Sandys, if the delay lasts much longer than that. All this points to the suggestion that either the whole team or selected members of it should be on their way back to Salisbury during the first week in August.

But they cannot go back to Salisbury without doing anything of substance. In my view the proper thing for them to do would be to put to the Governor the broad outline of our definitive proposal, whether perhaps in such detail as in Annex R(X)(66)7 is for consideration. If the general picture were agreeable to the Governor, it might then be put both to Smith and then to the Rhodesian official team (or perhaps to its leader). We could then hang around for a week or so, until Parliament rose, for the Rhodesian answer. They will doubtless take some time to answer. If the answer is favourable then we can reconsider new tactics: if the answer is unfavourable, we should then start talking on the lines of a 'new approach' (i.e. something on the lines of the Beadle Constitution).

The point here is that while the Commonwealth Secretary may be right in saying that Smith will not accept the package in Annex A as it stands, this does not mean to say that he will reject it outright. My guess is that he will want to talk about it and try and improve it from his point of view. If so, well and good. This will absorb time which is what we want, tactically, to happen. Smith himself said in the Rhodesian Parliament, a solution is going to take 'months, not weeks' which suggests both that he wants to continue talking and that he does not expect rapid results.

As regards the Prime Ministers' Conference, if things go tactically in Salisbury as I have outlined above, I do not really think that it should be beyond the realms of possibility to keep this going until well into September. I am afraid you are going to have a horrible time at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting whether or not the Rhodesian situation has been resolved. But I would have thought that, on balance, it would have been easier to resist pressures so long as we had not come to the point of success or failure than if the whole thing had been resolved by then and we had to report either success or failure. The line you do take in these circumstances at the Prime Ministers' Meeting will, of course, need very careful consideration.

In any case, we are in my view precluded from adopting the Commonwealth Secretary's preference for playing this along by our public commitment, in the communiqué, to resume before the end of July and the private commitment, to the Governor and to Sir C. Greenfield, to come back with a definite proposition. No one will quibble if we are a week or so late; but a deliberate decision to hold back, for whichever reason, will strike at the very roots of the confidence we have built up both at Government House and with Rhodesian officials.

I consider the maintenance of this confidence to be essential to the success of the strategy. If the Governor were to come to believe that we were stringing the talks (and him) along, then he would be very tempted to conclude that he had no useful role to play and therefore to resign. As for the Rhodesians in general, the whole of the Anglo-Rhodesian relationship since Federation has been bedevilled by absence of confidence on both sides: it is still a tender plant and could rapidly be shrivelled.

As for bringing the Governor back (under Royal auspices) I believe that the best thing to induce him to leave Rhodesia at present would be an invitation to discuss Annex A with Her Majesty's Government if he disagreed with it. If he agreed with it more or less as it stands, there would be no need for a visit to London; but if he disagreed with it (and I doubt if he would disagree) we should be unable to give him satisfaction. Ergo, Sir H. Gibbs should stay put.

To sum up. Strategically, we should continue with our present policies: the next step is to put Annex A of R(X) (66)7 in whole or in part to (i) the Governor (ii) Smith and (iii) Sir C. Greenfield. Tactically, the team, in whole or in part, should return to Salisbury during the first week in August, for a short visit to tide us over the rising of the House with the object of returning for a major discussion of Annex A which could well take us beyond the Prime Ministers' Conference.

As I have said, we may not succeed, either strategically or tactically. But, provided we continue with present policies, whether we fail or succeed, the grounds on which we fail or succeed will have been right and defensible to Parliament and the world. We have put our hands to this particular plough: now is certainly not the time to start looking back.

217 CAB 134/3167, R(X)(66)9**3 Aug 1967****'Future policy': minutes of the ninth meeting of the Cabinet RX Committee on the Rhodesia talks.¹ *Annex***

[The Cabinet RX Committee on the Rhodesia talks was established on 4 May 1966 and dissolved on 14 Sept 1967. Its purpose at the outset was to consider policy and tactics in the forthcoming talks with Rhodesian representatives. Chaired by Wilson, the other members of the committee were Brown, Bowden (lord president of the Council), Lord Gardiner (lord chancellor), Callaghan, Stewart, Healey, Bottomley, George Wigg (paymaster-general), and Sir E Jones (attorney-general). The records of the committee are at CAB 134/3167–3168.]

The Committee considered three memoranda by the Commonwealth Secretary (R(X)(66) 9, 10 and 11) dealing with our future policy towards Rhodesia.

The Commonwealth Secretary said that his memorandum, R(X)(66)9, had been prepared in the light of the Committee's previous discussion. The committee might wish to consider it in relation to the views of the United Kingdom Special Representative in East and Central Africa which were set out in R(X)(66)10, and the memorandum R(X)(66)11 which dealt with the effect of sanctions on the Rhodesian economy, the state of international co-operation on our sanctions policy and the effect of sanctions on the United Kingdom economy and balance of payments.

Our present policy was to seek by negotiation an honourable settlement, which would be fully consistent with our six principles and would involve the restoration of legal government in Rhodesia before any negotiations took place. The settlement might provide for independence before majority rule, provided that this was shown to be acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole. It must however be recognised that sanctions had not worked as rapidly as had originally been expected and there was no prospect of reaching a settlement before the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting in September. It might, indeed, be many months before a settlement could be reached. There was also the more profound dilemma that any settlement which could be negotiated with the European community which controlled Rhodesia might be unacceptable to the African members of the Commonwealth and could lead to a break-up of the Commonwealth. The alternative courses,² set out in paragraph 8 of the memorandum, had all been exhaustively considered in the past and were open to the most serious objections. There therefore appeared to be no alternative but to continue with our present policy for the time being, while recognising that no immediate solution was likely and that we should face a very difficult situation at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting.

On the question of immediate tactics the memorandum set out two alternative

¹ Also present at this meeting were Judith Hart, Malcolm MacDonald, Sir S Garner, N D Watson and J O Wright.

² The alternative courses were: (1) the use of force, (2) to involve the UN, (3) to increase economic pressure on Rhodesia through further mandatory action, (4) to settle with Smith immediately, (5) to break openly with Smith. Seeking UN assistance was at this point in time ruled out because Britain would be under a strong obligation to support and execute any action taken by the UN. It would be illogical for the UK to use its veto. To hand over to the UN by repeating action taken over Palestine in 1947–1948 would be 'a straight admission of failure'; it would also run the risk of the UN handing the problem back to Britain. In both cases it was 'inconceivable that the United Nations could resolve the problem without precipitating a state of war in Rhodesia and/or mandatory sanctions against South Africa and Portugal'. For subsequent consideration of UN involvement, see 228 note.

courses: (a) to resume the dialogue in Salisbury before September; or (b) to delay resumption in order to consult the Commonwealth first about the form of a negotiated settlement we might achieve. His own view was that the Governor might be invited to visit the United Kingdom towards the end of August so that we could explain to him the terms of the offer which we might make to Mr. Smith. After the Governor's visit the United Kingdom team of officials might return to Salisbury with our offer, preferably after the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting. It seemed likely that Mr. Smith would reject our offer; in which case we should publicly announce our proposals and their rejection. The shock which the announcement would cause in Rhodesia might be such as to rally moderate elements, possibly including the Rhodesian Armed Forces, in support of the Governor against the illegal regime. The African Commonwealth countries would undoubtedly disapprove of the terms of our offer to Mr. Smith, but only Zambia would in these circumstances be likely to react violently. We might mitigate the reactions generally by adding a statement that we would not now grant independence without majority rule.

The Foreign Secretary said that our policy must be based on an assessment of the strength of our own position. Since the use of force was ruled out, we must seek a negotiated settlement. It was unlikely that sanctions would compel the illegal regime to surrender; they might, however, in time induce the regime to agree to a settlement which could be reconciled with our six principles. There would be advantage in resuming the talks in Salisbury before the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting. It should not be assumed that the talks must result in deadlock since Mr. Smith, like ourselves, was anxious for a settlement. We could not, however, afford to be too rigid and should not introduce conditions which would certainly prove unacceptable. We could only insist on terms which would be fully acceptable to the African States if we could count on their full co-operation and practical assistance, which was clearly not forthcoming. We should therefore pursue our present policy and not base our approach on the expectation of a breakdown. We should try to get agreement with Zambia to intensify sanctions against Rhodesia which would put further pressure on the regime. The position at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting would in any case be difficult, but we should try to concentrate attention on positive aspects such as measures by all Commonwealth countries to assist Zambia.

In discussion there was general agreement with the views of the Foreign Secretary. There would be advantage in resuming the talks in Salisbury before the Prime Ministers' Meeting but the talks should preferably be concentrated on the application of the fifth principle³ and on the requirement for a return to constitutional rule before negotiations took place. The United Kingdom team should seek to avoid a breakdown and could say that we would be ready to give a clearer indication at a later stage of our ideas for the future constitutional position. This further and decisive stage in the talks might be after the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting, since it would be very difficult for it to be held on the eve of the Meeting.

The team might also arrange for a visit by the Governor to the United Kingdom towards the end of August. The visit should if possible be kept strictly secret until the Governor had left the United Kingdom and it would not be possible to refer to it in the statement to be made to Parliament before the Recess.

³ That the Rhodesian people as a whole had to accept the basis for independence.

At the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting we should seek to get it accepted that a settlement which gave effect to the six principles, and particularly the fifth principle, would be reasonable. Advantage might be taken on a suggestion by the Canadian Prime Minister that a Committee of the Meeting as a whole should be set up under Canadian chairmanship to discuss all aspects of the Rhodesia question. Such a Committee might conceivably have a useful role after the Meeting itself. We should seek to direct discussion to more positive aspects such as measures to help Zambia, as the Foreign Secretary had suggested. It would also be desirable to try to convince the other members of the Commonwealth of the real difficulties and implications of any attempt to use force and of the realities about an oil embargo against South Africa, which even if all its implications were accepted could not be effective in less than two years.

As regards the use of force it was pointed out that any arguments we deployed at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting would be likely to leak; it would be damaging if Mr. Smith were given the impression that we had in all circumstances absolutely ruled out the possibility of using force. Moreover the arguments against using force, based on the military difficulty and cost of the operation including its longer term consequences for our economy, the political objections to it in this country (particularly bearing in mind that the operation would have to begin with a pre-emptive strike by our aircraft) and the difficulty of resuming colonial responsibility over Rhodesia for a lengthy period in the circumstances that would obtain after the use of force, were all decisive for us, but might not all carry such weight with other members of the Commonwealth. Nevertheless the general view was that we should deploy the arguments against the use of force at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting. It might also be helpful if the Canadians could assist us; their representatives in some of the African Commonwealth countries might use some of the arguments in advance of the Meeting.

In further discussion it was pointed out that some of the arguments in R(X)(66)10 could not be reconciled with those in R(X)(66)11. Paragraph 16 of the former paper referred to the importance of proving that economic sanctions would eventually defeat the rebel regime. The evidence in the latter paper however was that even if sanctions were intensified they would not defeat the regime but would meanwhile do great and increasing damage to the United Kingdom economy. The cost of the Rhodesian situation to our balance of payments in 1966 might be about £80 million and there might be an additional burden of a further £80 million if Zambian copper exports fell to 25,000 tons a month. There was however some difference of view about the interpretation of these figures and about the likelihood and effect of action which the Zambian Government might take in regard to copper production and exports if they were dissatisfied with our policy over Rhodesia. A further study might be prepared on the vulnerability of our copper supplies to action by the Zambian Government and the study might also cover the possible effect on our economic interests in other African States if we reached a settlement with the Rhodesians which these States rejected as unsatisfactory.

At this point in the discussion the Prime Minister circulated a paper (text annexed to these minutes) concerning the possibility of offering Rhodesia a qualified Act of Union with the United Kingdom to last until majority rule had been achieved and was working satisfactorily. *The Prime Minister* said that the proposal was not intended to replace the offer we might make on the lines described in Annex A to

R(X)(66)7; it might be put to Mr. Smith as an alternative and even if he rejected it he might be more inclined to accept the offer in Annex A.

In discussion it was agreed that the proposal should be further studied. It need not be assumed that Mr. Smith would reject it, although it would offer him less than the grant of independence which he wanted. The problem of the return to constitutional rule would also remain, although it might prove less difficult in the context of the new proposal. The problem of United Kingdom military control, to which reference was made in paragraph 9, would certainly prove difficult, but a solution might be found to this by negotiation.

The Prime Minister, summing up the discussion, said that there was general agreement that in spite of the difficulties we should persevere with our present policy on the lines of course A described by the Commonwealth Secretary in R(X)(66)9 with the modifications proposed by the Foreign Secretary in their discussion. The negotiating team might return shortly to Salisbury; the talks should still be exploratory and should concentrate primarily on the return to constitutional rule and the fifth principle. The United Kingdom team should seek to avoid a breakdown and should indicate that we envisaged a further stage of the talks at a later date. In order to allay suspicion in the African Commonwealth countries it might be desirable that the purpose and limitations of the resumed talks at this stage, and in particular that these were not the prelude to immediate formal negotiations, should be explained in confidence to them: further consideration should be given to this aspect by the Commonwealth Secretary in the light of the discussion. It would also be important to co-ordinate the resumption of the talks in Salisbury with the further discussions with the Zambian Government about intensifying their sanctions against Rhodesia. Preparations might also be made for a visit by the Governor to the United Kingdom towards the end of August. This would include an audience with The Queen, which would have to be announced subsequently, but the visit should if possible remain secret until the Governor had left the country. He had undertaken to make a statement to Parliament about Rhodesia before the Recess and this might be done on 8th August. The statement would not of course refer to the Governor's visit but might indicate that the talks in Salisbury would be resumed and would deal particularly with the return to constitutional rule and the implementation of the fifth principle. The statement could also include an undertaking that the Government would take no irrevocable action on Rhodesia during the Recess without recalling Parliament. Further study should be given, in the first instance by officials, to the proposal which he had circulated and to the effect on our economic interests of possible action by Zambia and other African States on the lines indicated in discussion. The latter study should take into account the balance of our economic interests in Africa as between Southern Africa and the remainder and the respective effect on these interests of a break in our relations with the African States on the one hand and South Africa on the other. Meanwhile these matters must be treated with the utmost discretion.

The Committee:—

- (1) Took note, with approval, of the Prime Minister's summing up of their discussion.
- (2) Invited the Commonwealth Secretary to prepare the draft of the statement to be made by the Prime Minister in Parliament on 8th August.

- (3) Invited the Commonwealth Secretary to arrange for an interdepartmental study by officials of the paper circulated by the Prime Minister.
- (4) Invited the Chancellor of the Exchequer to arrange for an interdepartmental study by officials of the effect on our economic interests of possible action by Zambia and other African States, on the lines indicated in the Prime Minister's summing up.
- (5) Invited the Secretary of State for Defence, in consultation with the Commonwealth Secretary, to consider in the light of the discussion, how the implications of the use of force could best be demonstrated to the other members of the Commonwealth.
- (6) Invited the Commonwealth Secretary to consider what confidential information on the resumption of the talks could be given to other Commonwealth Governments.⁴

Annex to 217

1. This is not put forward as an alternative to Annex A or any variant of Annex A on which we may agree. It is meant to be a supplementary offer and in shorthand could be known as Annex B. The idea would be that we could offer Smith Annex A (as amended) and Annex B as an alternative.

2. The Annex B proposal is that we should offer Rhodesia a qualified act of union on Northern Irish lines, to last until majority rule has been achieved as a result of the operation of the 1961 Constitution (as amended). It is most unlikely this will be accepted but it will be regarded in British public opinion, internationally, and in many sections of Rhodesian opinion even, as an act of generosity and imagination. It would also have the advantage Commonwealthwise of involving no loss of British sovereignty until majority rule was achieved and working satisfactorily.

3. Its intellectual ancestors are partly the Northern Ireland settlement and partly the abortive Malta Round Table proposals. It is important that as in the case of Malta,

⁴ As Wright had anticipated (see 216), Britain came under intense but not unanimous pressure (Malaysia and the older Commonwealth countries supported the UK) at the London conference of Commonwealth prime ministers in Sept 1966 to use force to bring down the Smith regime (for the records of the conference, see FCO 49/213). Wilson was also under pressure to declare categorically there would be no independence before majority rule, and that if a settlement could not be reached, the UK would propose mandatory sanctions. The Cabinet met in mid-conference on 10 Sept to decide how Britain should respond. Ministers accepted that unless Commonwealth concerns could be met 'in some degree', there was a risk some countries might leave the organisation, 'with a consequential blow to confidence in the Commonwealth association which could have serious lasting results'. The government's subsequent position at the UN on the Rhodesian question would be 'gravely embarrassed'. If it were necessary to obtain Commonwealth agreement at the conference, ministers therefore decided Wilson should confirm that as a settlement had to be acceptable to the Rhodesian people as a whole, this implied there could be no independence before majority rule unless the people as a whole were in favour. The prime minister also assumed the position that if the regime did not end the rebellion and transfer executive authority to the governor before the end of the year, all previous offers for a settlement would be withdrawn, no further proposals would be made to the British parliament for a settlement involving independence before majority rule, and at the UN the UK would vote in favour of a Security Council resolution calling for selective but mandatory economic sanctions against Rhodesia. The last point would involve sanctions against oil passing through Mozambique but not (as yet) South Africa (CAB 128/41, CC 45(66), 10 Sept 1966).

terms should be negotiated by a Round Table Conference involving all parties in Britain and however defined, all parties in Rhodesia.

4. The suggestion is that following such a conference Rhodesia would be given twelve seats in the Westminster Parliament, six elected on the A-Roll and six on the B-Roll—with whatever qualifications for those two rolls may be agreed. This will mean in effect that white voters are over represented as compared with the United Kingdom and African voters severely unrepresented. But this could be justified; it would be difficult to have one-man, one-vote *and* equal electoral districts or the numbers would be in the ratio of twenty African MPs to one European.

5. It would be provided that while Rhodesian MPs (A-Roll and B-Roll) would play a full part in the work of Parliament, they would not vote on any question where the Salisbury Parliament had jurisdiction. (This is different from the Northern Ireland proposal, but not different from what I should like to see for Northern Ireland.) The issues on which they could and could not vote could be settled by a certificate from Mr. Speaker. In addition it would probably have to be provided that they could not vote on an issue (again certified by Mr. Speaker) which represented a motion of confidence in the Government, unless the motion related to Rhodesia; otherwise in times of a small majority (as in 1964–66) the Rhodesian MPs would hold the fate of Britain in their hands. We should obviously want to set up a Rhodesian Grand Committee.

6. The Salisbury Parliament would continue to operate on some form of 1961 constitution. Amendments to it would not need to be so rigorous as those on which we are insisting in the Salisbury talks, because there would be no possibility of retrogressive action after independence. But this would provide a real test of the repeated assertions by Europeans that 1961 provides majority rule at a reasonably early date. Until it did provide majority rule we would hold the sovereignty. We might, however, have to tighten the provisions for progress towards majority rule in the 1961 Constitution while not having to be so tough about blocking mechanisms etc.

7. I would not suggest that during this period of union there should be assimilation of taxation or social benefits.

8. At the end of the period, i.e. when majority rule had been achieved, the Rhodesian people 'as a whole' would be given the opportunity of deciding for independence or for a continuance of the union system.

9. One of the most difficult problems would relate to control over the Rhodesian armed forces. In theory they should be under British control but this might be the most unacceptable element in the proposition so far as white Rhodesians are concerned. A compromise might be that the Governor be appointed Commander-in-Chief and we might possibly include the Sovereign Base Area proposal (with an air strip) with this as well as in the Annex A proposal.

10. This proposal would have a number of obvious advantages including the recognition of the fact that we hold international responsibility for Rhodesia but are unable to make it a reality. I believe it would be welcomed as imaginative and generous by most of our own people, and its rejection by Smith and his colleagues—simultaneously with the rejection of Annex A—would increase the impatience with which our people feel about Smith and strengthen the acceptance of our fall back position, though if both were not accepted by, e.g. January 1, we should revert to the suggestion of status quo, sanctions, and no independence before majority rule.

218 DO 207/5, no 61

12 Oct 1966

[UK public opinion]: letter from S Witzenfeld¹ to J S Ellis² on the latest opinion poll findings on the Commonwealth and Rhodesia

You may be interested in the following extract from the N.O.P. September Bulletin. I must add my customary warning about technical standards and copyright clearance.

The Commonwealth

54% of the electorate consider the Commonwealth to be very important or quite important to them, but 40% regard the Commonwealth as not very important or not at all important. It seems, therefore that there is a good deal of apathy about the Commonwealth. This is particularly true of Labour voters. Only 51% of them think the Commonwealth is very important or quite important, compared with 62% of Liberals and 60% of Conservatives.

Q. Thinking about the Commonwealth, how important is the Commonwealth to you?

<i>September 12th</i>	<i>ALL</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>Liberal</i>
	%	%	%	%
Very important	26	29	24	28
Quite important	28	31	27	34
Not very important	26	25	28	27
Not at all important	14	10	16	10
Don't Know	6	5	5	1

At the time of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference respondents were asked how much they would care if some of the African countries left the Commonwealth because of Britain's policy on Rhodesia. The answers make it clear that the ideal of a multi-racial Commonwealth is not very attractive to the electorate. Only 13% would care very much if some of the African members walked out, and 29% would not care at all.

Q. And how much would you personally care if some of the African countries left the Commonwealth because of the Government Policy on Rhodesia?

<i>September 12th</i>	<i>ALL</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>Liberal</i>
	%	%	%	%
Very much	13	16	11	14
Quite a lot	18	18	18	24
Not very much	30	29	32	30
Not at all	29	29	29	28
Don't know	10	8	10	4

Rhodesia

The Government has been consistent in its reluctance to use force as a solution to the Rhodesian problem, and public opinion is solidly behind the Government on this issue. Only 16% think that Britain should use force, and 72% are against it.

There may be broad agreement that force should not be used against Rhodesia, but there is agreement about little else. 13% of the electorate would support an

¹ Administration officer, Central Office of Information.

² Head of Information Division, Commonwealth Office.

extension of sanctions. 14% think that Mr. Smith should be accepted as the Prime Minister of Rhodesia, and only 10% believe that Britain should continue with its present sanctions policy. 34% think that the problem should be left to the United Nations, but this may merely reflect a general belief that the problem is a tiresome one, and that it would be better if it were out of Britain's hands.

Q. Do you think the British Government should use force in Rhodesia or not?

<i>September 12th</i>	<i>ALL</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>Liberal</i>
	%	%	%	%
Should	16	15	17	11
Should not	72	74	70	84
Don't know	12	11	13	5

Those saying 'should not' or 'don't know' to the previous question were asked:

Q. Which of these statements comes closest to your own opinion about Rhodesia?

- Britain should extend sanctions
- Britain should continue with sanctions as they are
- Britain should leave the matter to the United Nations
- Britain should accept Mr. Smith as the Prime Minister of Rhodesia

	<i>ALL</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>Liberal</i>
	%	%	%	%
Extend sanctions	13	11	16	13
Continue with sanctions	10	8	12	5
Leave to U.N.	34	34	32	49
Accept Mr. Smith	14	20	10	13
Don't know	13	12	13	9
	—	—	—	—
ALL SAYING 'SHOULD NOT' OR 'DON'T KNOW' ON PREVIOUS QUESTION	84	85	83	89

219 DO 207/337, no 1

[Nov 1966]

'Future policy towards Rhodesia: comments': memorandum by Mrs Hart on confrontation with South Africa and the use of force against Rhodesia

As the RX draft paper (Future Policy towards Rhodesia) explains, we are caught in an acute dilemma. Put in a nutshell, this is that we cannot retreat from the Rhodesian situation—without dishonour, and without immense loss of prestige, and without grave offence to the Commonwealth (and the Party). Yet the only policy we have, that of mandatory sanctions, will not succeed; and we reject the other three possibilities—the use of force, confrontation with South Africa, and turning the problem over to the United Nations.

2. The conclusion of the paper appears to be that we therefore buy time with mandatory sanctions, and leave the future unresolved. But to do this is to choose a policy of drift, without any reason for hoping that new factors will develop to change the nature of the dilemma. It will therefore be likely to be drift leading to defeat.

3. It is therefore a worthwhile exercise to look at alternative policies more closely than hitherto, if only to ask some relevant questions.

A. *Confrontation with South Africa*

4. At present, our vulnerable economy would be disastrously affected by South African retaliation against our own trade with South Africa if we embarked upon mandatory sanctions against South Africa. Although retaliation is not a certainty, we must assume that it would occur. But is it the case that this necessarily holds good for several years ahead, if all possible preparations were made to limit the effects on us? The arguments against the risk of confrontation have so far been outlined as follows:—

(i) *We would stand to lose £250 m. of exports*

What is the rate of growth of exports to South Africa compared with the rate of growth of exports to other countries? And to the Commonwealth, distinguishing between the new and the old Commonwealth? What will be the ratio of exports to South Africa to total exports if the former stands still while total exports increase in the next few years? What is the breakdown of South African exports, and who are the major buyers of other exports of similar products? One would like to see all those figures. It could be the case that a drive for three or four years, with conscious Commonwealth cooperation, to find alternative markets for £250 m. of exports could be successful.

(ii) *A fall in world supplies of important commodities, particularly copper and wool, could add considerably to our import bill*

How does retention of world copper supplies from South Africa balance a loss of copper supplies to us from Zambia? How far could long-term advance contracts to other wool-supplying countries increase, within a period of two or three years, world wool supplies to the point where world prices were little affected by deprivation of South African supplies?

(iii) *There would be annual loss of £60 m. of investment income and over £20 m. of other invisible exports. I take it that this is inevitable.*

5. It is worth considering whether we might ask for both Commonwealth and world cooperation in assisting us to prepare, over a given period of time, for confrontation with South Africa. The prospect of ending South African apartheid would be the one thing that would persuade the new Commonwealth to be patient about Rhodesia: if a U.N. plan to this end were put forward by us, and accepted, American cooperation would—judging by recent American actions—be forthcoming. And it might be that the preparations for confrontation would be the one thing to dissipate Rhodesian confidence, so that such a long-term programme might just possibly bring Rhodesian results earlier.

6. Unless we have an effective alternative policy on Rhodesia, this is the one morally justifiable reason for accepting temporary defeat there. We would be saying to the Commonwealth and to the world: ‘Fascism and racialism are not to be tolerated anywhere. They create the tensions that will ultimately lead to disaster and bloodshed in Africa. So we are ready to tackle both South Africa and Rhodesia if you will help us to prepare for it.’

7. We would have to have a detailed economic plan to put to the U.N. Asking for cooperation in generalised terms would be no good at all. We would have to be specific and positive in our approach. Would South Africa retaliate against us at once,

whenever we put forward such a plan? We would have to ensure that if, she did, the rest of the world retaliated against her at once; and that there were emergency plans for the wealthier U.N. nations to buy, by way of stockpiling, the goods South Africa had stopped buying from us. To the extent that this could be done, of course, an earlier confrontation of South Africa would be made possible.

8. Were we to put forward this policy, there would be the great advantage that we would have transferred some part of the onus of responsibility to others: failure would not be ours alone, but would be shared, even though we retained full responsibility for Rhodesia.

B. *Use of force*

9. Against a 'conventional' invasion of Rhodesia by British troops are all the logistic arguments which were outlined several months ago, and the arguments concerning public opinion here.

10. Against any sabotage or similar activities is the strong argument that responsibility could not for long be publicly evaded, and the consequences in terms of public opinion would be very serious indeed, since by the very nature of the activities involved we would have been precluded from any propaganda here to render the public more receptive to the use of force.

11. There is, however, a third possible way of using force which might not be ruled out by considerations of either logistics or public opinion, and might therefore be worth further thought. This is to conduct a war against economic and not human targets. It could hardly be called a war of non-violence, but it would be a war of non-killing: for which it might be possible by a prolonged period of propaganda to prepare British public opinion, and Service opinion.

12. It would be conducted mainly from the air, with pin-point bombing after prolonged public warning on each occasion of targets determined by their importance to the economy. It would be important that the base from which our planes were operating should be beyond the range of R.R.A.F. fighter aircraft. Is this possible? It would also be important that there should be an opportunity of assembling British troops for a final entry and occupation at a point beyond the range of the R.R.A.F.—near Dar-es-Saleam, ready to go up the Great North Road, which will be at least partly tarred within a year or so? There would obviously be many considerations to be taken into account, and there may will be overwhelming arguments against it.

13. But I would strongly argue that the idea behind this approach would be capable of gaining strong support both here and in the world as a whole, sickened as it is by the casualties on both sides of the Vietnam war.

14. It is of course possible that Rhodesians would burn themselves in the market place, by suicide assembly at target points. But that would be their madness, and not our guilt. It is also the case that we would face a crippled economy in Rhodesia: but private investment might well be encouraged to move in quickly, anticipating rapid growth, and reconstruction work would absorb unemployed labour until new factories were open. In any case, the cost to us of both the military operation and reconstruction could well be less than South African confrontation.

Conclusions

15. I therefore suggest that both A and B should be considered in depth, by the Departments concerned. It will have been seen from Washington telegrams that our

friends are becoming increasingly anxious to discern some viable British policy which they can support. From every point of view, therefore, we must explore every possibility.

220 PREM 13/1737

3 Dec 1966

[Tiger talks]: record of a resumed meeting between Mr Wilson and Mr Smith in the Admiral's Day Cabin of HMS *Tiger* at 9.30 pm [Extract]

[The following is an outline of the proposed *Tiger* settlement. To meet the first, second, third and sixth principles (see 202, note 2), a governor-general was to be appointed on the advice of the Rhodesian government. The Legislative Assembly was to consist of 33 'A' roll seats, 17 'B' roll seats (the franchise for which was to be extended to all Africans over 30 who satisfied the citizenship and residence qualifications), and 17 reserved European seats (cross voting being retained and applied to all seats). The Senate was to consist of 12 European seats, 8 African (elected by Africans on the 'A' and 'B' rolls voting together), and 6 Chiefs (elected by Chiefs' Council). Any alteration in the composition of both houses and in the number of seats was to be determined by a Delimitation Commission and effected by a special entrenchment procedure. Ordinary amendments of the constitution would require, as they did under the 1961 constitution, a vote of two-thirds of the total membership of the Legislative Assembly. Amendment of the specially entrenched provisions of the constitution would require a vote of at least three-quarters of the total membership of both houses voting together. There would be a right of appeal, first to a Constitutional Commission in Rhodesia (consisting of the chief justice and other judges), and then to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Britain. To meet the fourth principle, a Royal Commission would be set up to study and make recommendations on racial discrimination and, in particular, land apportionment. To meet the fifth principle, the existing legislature would be dissolved and Mr Smith invited, by the governor, to head a broad-based interim government, including representatives of existing political parties, independents and Africans. Censorship would be removed, 'normal political activities' permitted, and an impartial judicial tribunal would consider cases of detention and restriction on security grounds. A British government representative would be a member of a newly appointed Defence and Security Council. The settlement would be submitted to the test of acceptability to the people of Rhodesia as a whole by a Royal Commission whose composition and terms of reference would be agreed by the British government and the legal interim administration (PREM 13/1737, and *Rhodesia: Documents Relating to Proposals for a Settlement* (Cmnd 3171, December 1966).]

The Prime Minister said that during the adjournment he had received a message from Mr. Smith to the effect that, since he was now pressed for time and wished to leave Gibraltar as soon as possible, he hoped that any further thoughts which the Prime Minister might wish to leave with him could be sent to him on his aircraft. In the light of consultations which he had now had with his colleagues he could tell Mr. Smith that, so far as the British Government were concerned, he was free to embark on his aircraft whenever he wished; but in that case the proposed settlement would be withdrawn and the British Government would tell the world where they stood.

He invited Mr. Smith to consider the situation as it had developed during the last two days. He himself had come to the meeting with full powers to reach a final agreement in the assurance that Mr. Smith had similar authority. During the previous day, however, Mr. Smith had made it clear that he did not have full powers for this purpose. He had therefore suggested to Mr. Smith that, when the form of settlement had been worked out, he should consult his colleagues in Salisbury by telegram, in the hope that by this means it would still be possible to reach a final decision before both delegations had to leave Gibraltar. That morning, however, Mr. Smith had said that he felt that he must return personally to Salisbury in order to

explain the proposals to his associates; but he had appeared to agree that this should be on the basis of a document to which he himself would be personally committed. Now it seemed that he would not even undertake to commend it in Salisbury.

The British Cabinet had authorised him to meet Mr. Smith but only if it was clearly understood on both sides that the intention of the meeting was to reach a final and definitive settlement. They would object, rightly and understandably, if Mr. Smith now left without any commitment of any kind; and they could no longer be expected to authorise the Prime Minister to continue discussions on any other basis than that Mr. Smith, before leaving H.M.S. *Tiger*, must give his personal undertaking to commend the settlement to his colleagues. Even on this basis the settlement would be liable to criticism in the Commonwealth; but, if it was now to be treated in this irresponsible way and if it was thereafter rejected in Salisbury, the British Government would get the worst of all worlds.

He realised that some elements in the settlement were very hard for Mr. Smith to accept; but others were equally hard to accept. There must be give and take on both sides; and there was now very little time for further discussion. Nevertheless, at a moment when the future of Rhodesia—and, indeed, of the whole of southern Africa—was at stake, Mr. Smith had appeared unwilling in the interval since their last meeting to give his mind to the issues involved. In these circumstances he should now be prepared to stay for a little longer on the ship in order to resolve his doubts and to give, before disembarking, an assurance that on his return to Salisbury he would commend the settlement to his colleagues.

Mr. Smith asked why the Prime Minister had apparently changed his attitude on this point.

The Prime Minister replied that the British Government were not prepared to be pushed around.

Mr. Smith said that, even so, he was not prepared to say then and there that he would commend the settlement to his colleagues. He would give the matter further consideration on his return journey: and, after consulting his colleagues, he would let the British Government have their answer.

The Prime Minister said that it would be much better that Mr. Smith should stay for two or three hours more on board H.M.S. *Tiger* and finally make up his mind before leaving.

Mr. Smith repeated that he was not prepared to give an answer until he had returned to Salisbury; but, if he was forced into a corner and virtually compelled to decide then and there, the answer was 'No'.

The Commonwealth Secretary pointed out that only that morning Mr. Smith had said that, when the outstanding points on the settlement had been agreed, he would say in the evening whether he could undertake to commend the settlement to his colleagues.

Mr. Smith replied that this was an undertaking which the Commonwealth Secretary had asked him to give but that he himself had never agreed to do so. Now, having given the matter further thought, he was clear that he could not give any undertaking to commend the settlement to his colleagues, although he was prepared to see if he could convince himself during the homeward journey that it would be right, when he reached Salisbury, to ask them to accept it.

The Prime Minister asked Mr. Smith once again to commit himself on the spot.

Mr. Smith once again refused to do so, maintaining that on all the three main

issues¹ the British representatives had won and he had lost. Let them concede those issues to Rhodesia and he would sign the document there and then.

*Mr. Howman*² added that he and Mr. Smith fully understood that they must give their final answer by midnight on 4th/5th December. Why, then, must they be pressed to commit themselves forthwith on issues of such importance and complexity?

The Commonwealth Secretary said that the reason for pressing Mr. Smith on the point was because the British Government had genuinely accepted his assurance that he would come to the meeting on the basis of a clear understanding that he would be expected to commit himself.

The Prime Minister said that the issues involved were certainly complicated and difficult. But agreement on the constitutional questions involved had now been reached and the only matters outstanding were the broad-based interim government and the timing of the test of Rhodesian opinion in relation to the return to constitutional government. It had been Mr. Smith's offer to consider a return to legality on the basis of the 1961 Constitution which had made the British Government think it worthwhile to agree to the meeting. But Mr. Smith had come without the powers which we had expected him to have; and during the discussions he had moved progressively further away from the point of personal commitment to the settlement which was now envisaged. This was a position which the British Government could no longer accept.

*The Attorney-General*³ agreed, emphasising that Mr. Smith's attitude would place the British Government in an intolerable position.

The Prime Minister said that it had compelled him to ask himself once again whether the British Government should really allow the Commonwealth to break up for the sake of a country whose population was only a fraction of 1 per cent of the population of the Commonwealth as a whole. He had taken risks in regard to the Commonwealth in the interests of reaching a reasonable and honourable agreement on the Rhodesian problem; but he was not prepared to run further risks.

Mr. Smith replied that it was unfair to say that Rhodesia was putting Britain in an impossible position. The opposite was true. It was Britain which was seeking once again—as in 1961—to impose a constitutional settlement on Rhodesia.

The Prime Minister asked Mr. Smith to remember the events of October 1965. Up to the last moment the British Government had maintained discussions with the then Government and had continually put forward fresh proposals in order to avoid an illegal declaration of independence. But although Mr. Smith and his colleagues could have avoided i.d.i., they had chosen that course. The position now was very similar. Once again Mr. Smith and his colleagues were seeking to cling to their so-called independence when every other consideration suggested that they should give it up, not least the fact that, if they would come no part of the way to meet the British Government, they should be compelled to go irrevocably forward along the road of mandatory sanctions, to withdraw all our previous offers and to adopt the principle of no independence before majority rule. The situation was ridiculous. The Rhodesians had no need to cling obstinately to their state of pseudo-independence; but they found it difficult to make the effort to give it up. Equally, it ought not to be inevitable

¹ The three main issues for Smith were the entrenchment of section 37 of the constitution relating to the number of constituencies and electoral districts; the broad-based interim government; and the UK's insistence on a return to legality as a prior condition of the test of Rhodesian public opinion.

² Rhodesian minister of information and immigration.

³ Sir E Jones.

for Britain to embark on mandatory sanctions; but her declared policy together with international opinion would leave her no alternative. Each was in a difficulty; neither was seeking to dictate to the other; and a point had now been reached when it should be possible to reach agreement if the necessary good will was present on each side. It was perfectly possible for Mr. Smith, in terms of the timetable of his aircraft's movements, to spend a little more time on the ship; but, if he was unable to reach a decision in the next two or three hours, there would be no option but to withdraw the settlement and the final break between the two countries would take place.

Mr. Smith said that he could not understand why the Prime Minister was now going back on the previous understanding about the manner in which the discussions should be conducted.

The Prime Minister replied that it was Mr. Smith who was going back on the original understanding about the basis of the meeting. He should have been devoting the whole of the interval since the last discussion in the afternoon to satisfying himself that he could honourably commend the settlement to his colleagues.

Mr. Smith said that it had been clear from the outset that he would have to go back to Salisbury and consult his colleagues before he could express a firm view on any proposed settlement. It was true that he could have consulted them by telegram; but the issues were too complex to be dealt with in this way. It was for these reasons that he had come to the conclusion that he must first convince himself about the adequacy of the proposed settlement and then convince his colleagues. He had discussed the matter with Mr. Howman, who had agreed that this was the right course. But he had never given any undertaking that he would convince even himself before leaving Gibraltar; nor was he likely to do so by spending a few more hours on board H.M.S. *Tiger*. In short, if he must decide there and then, his decision was 'No'; but, if he might return to Salisbury and consult his colleagues, the answer might be 'Yes'.

The Prime Minister said that, if he could not convince Mr. Smith himself, it was unlikely that he could carry conviction with Mr. Smith's colleagues. He must repeat that, if any proposals were to be taken to Salisbury, they must be agreed proposals in the sense of carrying Mr. Smith's endorsement as well as his own. Earlier in the day he had thought that Mr. Smith wished and intended to reach agreement, if he could; now he doubted this.

Mr. Smith replied that it had never been in his mind to agree then and there. Moreover, he had made this wholly clear in the presence of the Governor and the Chief Justice; and, if the Prime Minister did not accept his word, perhaps they should be invited to confirm what he had said.

At this point the Governor and the Chief Justice of Rhodesia, Sir Hugh Beadle, joined the meeting. . . .

221 FCO 36/196, no 61 27 July 1967 [South Africa]: inward telegram no 301 from Sir J Nicholls (Pretoria) to Mr Brown on an interview about Rhodesia with Mr Vorster¹

[On 16 Dec 1966, following the collapse of the *Tiger* talks, the UN Security Council, at Britain's request, voted for selective mandatory sanctions on individual commodities

¹ B J Vorster, prime minister of South Africa, 1966–1978; state president, 1978–1979.

important to the Rhodesian economy, and for a ban on the export of oil to Rhodesia by any country. In moving this resolution the British government made clear that it did not intend to allow sanctions to escalate into economic confrontation with third countries (Portugal and South Africa).² In an apparent reversal of its own position adopted after *Tiger*, Britain also rejected an African amendment calling upon the UK to withdraw all previous offers to the rebel regime and to give a categorical assurance there would be no independence before the attainment of majority rule. Lord Caradon, the UK representative at the UN, countered that the amendment impinged on matters within the sovereignty of the British parliament. Later in the year, in articles published on 27 Aug and 3 Sept 1967, the London-based *Sunday Times* newspaper revealed the methods used to evade sanctions on Rhodesian minerals and manufactured goods, stressing that Mozambique and South Africa were important commercial go-betweens. Oil was still getting through to Rhodesia from a variety of sources.]

I saw the Prime Minister this morning at his request. After we had exchanged impressions on our respective visits to South West Africa he reminded me that, at our last talk, we had had to leave out Rhodesia for lack of time. It was this that he wished to discuss today.

2. Mr. Vorster began by expressing great satisfaction that Mr. Wilson's statement of 25 July³ opened up the possibility of fruitful negotiations once again. He was, however, disturbed by the Prime Minister's reference to the 'seepage of oil through Mozambique' and the implication of this, and other recent statements, that sanctions might be extended and tightened up. He earnestly trusted that nothing of the kind would be done.

3. I said that Her Majesty's Government were themselves extremely perturbed by Portugal's attitude towards sanctions. There was ample evidence that Mozambique supplied the greater part of Rhodesia's petroleum requirements and, if Portugal's attitude continued unchanged, there would obviously be strong pressure at the next General Assembly for measures to deal with the leak. We wanted a settlement by negotiations and certainly had no interest in promoting an extension of sanctions to other countries but, if nothing could be achieved by negotiation, we could hardly be expected to stand out against moves to prevent the leak through Mozambique.

4. The Prime Minister interjected that the so-called leak consisted of supplies from British oil companies. I said that this was entirely untrue, and that I had described the actual situation to Dr. Muller⁴ as recently as 24 July (my telegram No. 287): it was bad enough that Portugal should be supplying oil to Rhodesia through Mozambique but it was adding insult to injury to pretend that this was being done by British companies and, by implication, in collusion with South Africa.

² Behind the US, West Germany and Sweden, South Africa was Britain's fourth largest trading partner in 1966, and the UK was South Africa's largest trading partner. UK investments in South Africa were estimated at £950 million, producing an annual income in excess of £60 million (about 10–12 per cent of total UK earnings from investments other than oil). The value of shipping services was about £43 million and the earnings of British airlines about £6 million. For the UK the consequences of full economic sanctions against South Africa would be serious. The total loss to the balance of payments would be in the order of £300 million in the first year. This would mean redundancies in UK firms unable to find alternative markets. An estimated 13,000 British seamen would lose their jobs and 15,000 jobs in shipbuilding and ancillary industries would be at risk (DO 207/232, no 28, 'British economic interests in South Africa', note by FO and Treasury, 1 Dec 1966, and DO 207/199, no 640A). See also 361.

³ A reference to Wilson's statement in the House of Commons on 25 July 1967 in which the prime minister reported the outcome of a further visit to Rhodesia by Lord Alport and outlined the parameters within which the governor was to explore with the Rhodesians the preliminaries for negotiating a settlement (*H of C Debs*, vol, 751, cols 57–60).

⁴ Dr H Muller, South African foreign minister, 1964–1977.

5. Mr. Vorster did not comment directly but repeated his hope that no measures would be taken against Portugal. Speaking very seriously, he said that he must tell me frankly that, if the Mozambique leak were blocked, the loss to Rhodesia would be made good from South Africa. This was not a matter of policy: it reflected the stark fact that no South African Government (whether his own or a new one formed by the Opposition) could survive for a week if it was seen to be leaving Rhodesia in the lurch. He attached immense importance to friendly relations with the United Kingdom: he wanted to maintain and improve them: and he fully realized that they would be seriously endangered in the circumstances he had described. But given the state of mind of his electorate that danger was one which he would not be able to avoid.

6. I said that this was a very serious statement and that much more than United Kingdom/South African relations would be involved if South Africa deliberately set out to support Rhodesia economically. It was not for me to question his assessment of public opinion in South Africa: I could only say that, if he was right (which I doubted), the only way of averting a very serious situation was to secure a negotiated settlement with Rhodesia as soon as possible. I hoped that this meant that South Africa would use all her influence with the Smith régime to bring this about.

7. Mr. Vorster replied that he had always been in favour of an honourable settlement: he had said so publicly many times and the Rhodesia Government were in no doubt that this was his view. But he still regarded the dispute as an internal one between the United Kingdom and Rhodesia and he would not put pressure on either side to accept a solution which they regard as dishonourable. Subject to this, he would certainly be willing to help if he could.

8. I replied that the best help he could give would be to encourage those in Rhodesia (among whom we could probably include Smith) who wanted a negotiated settlement: to make it clear to them that negotiation implied compromise: and to make it equally clear to the diehards that they should not rely on South Africa to bail them out if they rejected negotiation. Mr. Vorster replied that in his opinion we over-estimated the importance of divisions inside the Smith Government and in the country at large: he thought we would be unwise to rely on them and added that increased pressure would in any case merely strengthen those less willing to negotiate.

9. I insisted that the division of opinion in Rhodesia was a real one and that, in our judgment, a substantial majority of white Rhodesians, including probably a majority of those in positions of influence, wanted a settlement. It was surely in South Africa's interest to encourage them and not those extremists who thought that, in the last resort, they could always fall back on incorporation in the Republic. Mr. Vorster replied that such people, if they existed, were mad. He had enough problems on his hands without adding another two million or so blacks.

10. The foregoing represents the main points of a conversation which lasted over an hour and a half. The exchanges set out above were not consecutive but interrupted by a good deal of hard hitting argument on side issues, such as racial riots in the United States, racial relations in the United Kingdom, Britain's historical inability to understand black or white Africans, and so forth. I need not recount these in detail, though I hope I gave as good as I got. The conversation was amiable throughout and, although Mr. Vorster's matter was tough his manner was much more relaxed than during our last talk. Obviously the conversation must be seen

against the background of Dr. Nogueira's⁵ visit (he called on the Prime Minister yesterday). It is tempting to believe that his remarks about oil represent no more than an attempt to dissuade us from strong measures against Portugal: but I am not convinced that he was bluffing. At no point did he say or imply that he or his government would willingly give more economic support to Rhodesia.

⁵ Portuguese foreign minister.

222 PREM 13/1751

7 Sept 1967

[NIBMAR]: letter from Joan Watson¹ to R J Dawe² on the meaning NIBMAR

We have noticed recently an increasing tendency on the part of the press and public to interpret Nibmar as meaning no independence before majority *African* rule. This is not in accordance with the origin of the phrase; for example, in the communiqué of the September 1966 Commonwealth Prime Ministers' meeting, paragraph 10(a) refers to 'independence before majority rule', without any specification that the majority will be African.

The tendency to insert the word 'African' probably has two sources. One is the obvious fact that the great majority of the population in Rhodesia are Africans, so that majority rule will not in fact be attainable without effective African control of the Government there. The other probable source is the fact that the letter 'a' having been inserted into the abbreviated form 'Nibmar' in order to make it pronounceable, it came to be regarded as the initial letter of a separate word.

Malcolm MacDonald drew our attention to the tendency to insert 'African' when he was last in London, and suggested that we should do what might be possible to discourage this tendency as being contrary to the multi-racial approach which is fundamental to British Government Policy on Rhodesia, and as providing material for the regime's propaganda machine to attack us as racialists and as hostile to the white inhabitants of Rhodesia. MacDonald suggested in fact that the word 'Nibmar' should be altered to 'N.I.B.M.R.'. This seems to us to be probably impossible at this late stage, but we do think that it is important to avoid inserting 'African' in any official statement etc., in which the phrase is spelled out in full. We also think that it would be desirable to use the form 'Nibmar' rather than 'n.i.b.m.a.r.' or even 'NIBMAR', since either of these forms suggests that the letter 'a' is the initial letter of a separate word (i.e. African) rather than simply being the second letter of 'majority', inserted for euphony.

It may be thought that this is a very small point to worry about, but we have noticed recently some examples of the phrase 'majority African rule' in official documents, and also some attempts by Rhodesian propagandists to exploit such examples to increase the animosity felt by many Europeans in Rhodesia towards the British Government. There is also the minor point that it is just possible that at some stage we might wish to argue that the Nibmar condition had been satisfied as a result of a coalition between certain European elements in Rhodesia and some Africans.

¹ Private secretary, Commonwealth Office.

² Prime Minister's Office.

If you agree, we will try to ensure that the general British Government practice becomes to write the abbreviation as 'Nibmar' and to spell it out, when necessary to do so, as 'no independence before majority rule'.³

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Foreign Secretary, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President of the Council, the Attorney General and Secretary to the Cabinet.

³ Mr Wilson indicated his approval on 7 Sept.

223 FCO 25/318, no 24 18 Sept 1967
 'Rhodesia: tentative summary of conclusions': minute by Sir S Garner
 arguing that the UK should decide whether to go 'for a win, loss or
 draw'

1. We cannot go back on basic matters of principle (these do not necessarily include everything in all detailed statements made in the past).

2. We embarked on and persevered with sanctions in the hope that economic pressure would bring about a political result.

3. Similarly we engaged in discussion with the regime in the hope that the economic prospect as a result of sanctions would have made them amenable to our point of view.

4. There seems, however, no prospect, with the current rate of the effectiveness of sanctions, of achieving our aims under 2 and 3 above in the near future, if ever.

5. In particular:—

(a) sanctions, though retarding development, far from demoralising the Europeans, have so far tended to unify them behind the Rhodesia Front; and

(b) there seems no prospect of an honourable solution by negotiation with the regime.

6. There seems no hope of a compromise so long as the two sides stick to their positions on u.d.i. and NIBMAR respectively, since these are mutually irreconcilable. Even if the regime were now to indicate that they would agree to 'Tiger' this would not provide a solution, since it seems inconceivable that, under any fair test, it would be found acceptable to the majority.

7. We have harmed ourselves in the past by keeping all options open; this has reduced credibility in our policies.

8. We need to have a clear statement on our objective and on our means of achieving it.

9. Is our objective:—

(a) the overthrow of the regime? or

(b) an honourable settlement with the regime?

10. The objection to (a) is that it would involve a major effort, might result in our taking over a hostile territory and would require Britain to be internationally accountable, possibly for a long time to come.

The objection to (b) is that it might well involve stretching the meaning of 'honour' pretty far to reach any settlement at all.

11. The means open to us are:—

- (i) use of military force;
- (ii) stepping up sanctions;
- (iii) settlement by negotiation.

12. The objections are obvious in the case of (i), though we should remain willing to take a fresh look at the problem, particularly if circumstances changed.

The objections to (ii) are the risks of escalation since sanctions will never be completely effective without South African co-operation.

The objections to (iii) are that Smith will not accept our conditions. Even if he agreed to 'Tiger' it would not be 'acceptable to the majority of the people'. Any settlement on a NIBMAR basis would leave us 'carrying the can' for an unacceptable time in the future.

13. There is really no easy solution of the Rhodesian problem since there is no prospect of Africans and Europeans agreeing to a form of society based on co-operation between them and on equality and justice. It looks also, from the foregoing, as if no course we adopt is likely to bring about an ideal solution.

14. If this is so, should we think of other courses which, though unheroic, may be realistic, such as:—

- (a) working all out for a settlement which the South Africans would be willing to press Rhodesia to accept (but to gain acceptance this would almost certainly have to fall short of some of our principles);
- (b) carrying on as at present—i.e. standing by all our declarations and actions, but making it clear that we are not prepared to do more?

(The logical conclusion of this might be that ultimately we should hand the problem to the U.N. though hitherto we have always seen strong objections to this.)

15. *Conclusion*

Clearly there is no simple answer to this very complex problem, but before we decide on immediate detailed measures it would be helpful to know whether it is Government policy:—

- (a) in the last resort to use force in one form or another;
- (b) to settle as best we can; or
- (c) go on as at present with no clear result in sight.

In other words do we want to go for a win, loss or draw?¹

¹ Roberts, minister of state at the FO, argued (29 Sept 1967) that the UK should concentrate on achieving a settlement with Smith, with the grant of immediate or early independence 'under the British Crown', coupled with a guarantee by the Rhodesian government, that over fifteen years 'genuine and steady progress' would be made to advance the social, economic and political status of all Rhodesians (FCO 25/319, no 44).

224 PREM 13/2319

30 Oct 1967

[Kenyatta and Rhodesia]: inward telegram no 1197 from Mr Thomson (Kampala) to the Commonwealth Office on his discussion with President Kenyatta about Rhodesia

I saw Kenyatta at his Lodge this morning and we talked for about an hour.¹ Atmosphere was frank but friendly, Kenyatta looked very fit despite his recent exertions.

2. This telegram deals with our discussion on Rhodesia. Other points are being covered by High Commissioner Nairobi.

3. I opened the discussion by expounding basis of our present thinking in the same way as I did with Nyerere, emphasising the need to maintain a pattern of close consultation on Rhodesia. Kenyatta's response was measured and thoughtful. He said that he found it hard to talk about Rhodesia because he had talked the problem over so many times and still found it intractable. Many African countries thought that we should use force but just how we could do it was hard to say. He realised the difficulties about ordering British troops to go and fight British people. Moreover people might start shooting Africans. Then there might be a racial war without end which would be terrible for Africa.

4. At the same time he did not see how a peaceful solution could be achieved so long as Smith was closely supported by South Africa. He was inclined to agree with those who thought either that sanctions had failed or that they had not had the intended effect. Britain said that she could not have an economic confrontation with South Africa and as long as that was so Rhodesia could always get what she wanted either from South Africa or Mozambique.

5. The problem was made even more difficult because the Africans in Rhodesia were subdued and hopeless. The Kenya Government had asserted their adherence to NIBMAR time and time again but how to achieve majority rule in these circumstances he did not know. Even if the Africans did try to assert themselves South Africa would move in. He asked whether we could not do something to train Rhodesian Africans to fight for their independence and send out people to organise them. If only there was a strong African independence movement in Rhodesia world opinion would be in sympathy with it. He was worried about the possibility that Smith would declare a Republic and that it would then be too late to help the Africans.

6. I said that it was wrong to assume that sanctions had failed because they had not yet succeeded. We had done all we could to see that South Africa was not used as a back door to Rhodesia but we could not carry our diplomatic pressures on South Africa to the point of economic confrontation. We would however keep up diplomatic pressure because it was a real South African interest that the Rhodesian problem should be settled (here I mentioned that I might be seeing Muller when I pass through Pretoria). There were still ways of making sanctions more effective so that

¹ Thomson held discussions with a number of African leaders (Kenyatta was in the Ugandan capital) before visiting Smith in Salisbury from 8 to 10 November (for details see PREM 13/2319). At the time of *Tiger*, much had been made of the conditions for a return to legality as the reason why Smith rejected the proposed settlement. During Thomson's visit Smith put forward amendments to *Tiger* which challenged the six principles and demonstrated his opposition to eventual African rule.

the Rhodesian whites would come to feel isolated from the international community. In those circumstances the conditions for a just settlement could be created. The difficulty about the use of force would entail an invasion, and as Kenyatta had said, a war of which no one could foresee the end or the consequences. Any declaration of a Republic would be illegal and would not alter the central fact that the Regime was in rebellion against the Crown. It would not affect our determination to discharge our responsibility for the Rhodesian Africans. Our response to it would be to intensify pressure.

7. The meeting was I think a useful one and I was left with the impression that Kenyatta fully appreciated the difficulties and the length of the task ahead of us. In private at least it seems that he is unlikely to press us to extreme or ineffective action but it may be significant that he stopped short of agreeing that we could not afford economic confrontation with South Africa.

225 PREM 13/2320, no 6

3 Jan 1968

'Rhodesia': Commonwealth Office note of a meeting between Mr Thomson and Mr Marsh on the incitement of internal disorder

[Richard Marsh was minister of power, 1966–1968. He sent a minute to Wilson on 13 Dec 1967 commenting on 'the lack of any serious internal disorder [in Rhodesia] this long after events': 'Whatever we do about sanctions, Kenya, Cyprus and Aden show that internal disorders produce far quicker reactions than a slow-down of economic growth.' Marsh acknowledged 'the poor level of African leadership in Rhodesia', but expressed surprise that the countryside seemed so peaceful. He requested an opportunity for a discussion. Unable to decipher the initials at the end of Marsh's minute, Wilson asked if it were Marsh or Reginald Freeson, parliamentary under-secretary of state at the Ministry of Power. When informed that it was Marsh, the prime minister commented: 'OK. Does he want to stir something up?' Having then seen the record below of the meeting between Thomson and Marsh, Wilson asked Sir B Trend for comments. The Cabinet secretary replied that Thomson's arguments were 'pretty potent'. He also explained Marsh had always been interested in this aspect of the Rhodesian problem. As a former paymaster-general he had presided over several inter-departmental discussions at which the possibilities were 'exhaustively' considered (PREM 13/2320, no 8, minute by Trend, 17 Jan 1968).]

The *Minister of Power* explained that his examination of the implications of trying to bring down the Rhodesian regime by means of an oil embargo had led him to the conclusion that most probably economic sanctions would not work. This suggested that the collapse of the regime could be brought about only through other action. He wondered how far H.M.G. had considered incitement of internal disorder in Rhodesia, since if H.M.G.'s policy was to bring down the present regime a wholehearted effort should be made to do this, including the kind of special action he had mentioned.

The *Secretary of State* thanked Mr. Marsh for raising this matter privately rather than in a wider assembly. He explained that this course had been considered at the start, but not then proceeded with because talks were being begun with the regime. The talks in November, 1967, in Salisbury had ended that chapter, and the possibility suggested by Mr. Marsh had been looked at again. But the conclusion was that an attempt on these lines would be likely to do more harm than good. If there had been any real dynamic nationalist movement in Rhodesia, then the situation would be different. But the leadership of both ZANU and ZAPU was of poor quality, and both

organisations were deeply penetrated by Rhodesian and South African intelligence. Attempts of the kind suggested by Mr. Marsh would probably fail because of the incompetence of the Rhodesian Africans, and South Africa and Rhodesia would certainly learn of our involvement. This was particularly important because the governments of neighbouring African states—especially Botswana and Zambia—would expect us to protect them against any economic or military retaliation from Rhodesia or South Africa, if we had been responsible for promoting operations which had been launched from their territories. It was also probable that there would be a very sharp reaction from South Africa to the discovery that we were involved in such operations, such as might well lead to reprisals against British trade and investment.

Mr. Marsh said that fear of a real conflict developing on their back door-step might be the only thing to persuade the South African Government to put serious pressure on Smith to come to terms with us.

The *Secretary of State* agreed that this might be true, if a really serious conflict developed. But the prospects of any serious conflict in Rhodesia were slim. The forays by ‘freedom fighters’ had so far been quickly and efficiently mopped up, although they were well armed and apparently quite well trained. As some of the freedom fighters were aiming at South Africa, the South African authorities might well prefer to retain the opportunity to fight them in Rhodesia rather than further south.

Sir L. Monson pointed out that the rural population of Rhodesia was very much under the influence of the Chiefs and in any case had been penetrated by informers. The African population of the countryside had shown itself surprisingly ready to co-operate with the Rhodesian security forces in denouncing intruders—whether because they wished to do so or because they were afraid not to.

Mr. Marsh said he was glad to know that the matter had been thoroughly considered, and agreed that the objections were weighty.¹

¹ An official underlined ‘and agreed that the objections were weighty’ and added, ‘But he did not apparently say that they convinced him’.

226 FCO 36/124, no 131

4 Jan 1968

‘Rhodesia: “The long haul” versus “An early settlement”’: note by J R A Bottomley

[Malcolm MacDonald wrote two lengthy memoranda about Rhodesia in the autumn of 1967. Copies of the first—‘Reflections on Rhodesia’ (6 Sept)—were sent to the prime minister, the ministerial committee on Rhodesia, and the Cabinet Office. It was also seen by Sir J Nicholls who responded on 20 Sept (PREM 13/1741). Further comments from the two main protagonists in the debate were requested after a meeting at Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, on 6 Nov. MacDonald’s second memo—‘Further reflections on Rhodesia’ (11 Nov)—was longer than the first but the argument was essentially the same. Nicholls replied on 13 Nov. The reports and accompanying correspondence are too long to reproduce in their entirety (MacDonald was renowned for the length of his letters and memos). Bottomley provided a convenient summary in this note. The originals are in FCO 36/124.)]

When the Commonwealth Secretary was in Gaborone on 6 November, Mr. Malcolm MacDonald and Sir John Nicholls explained at his request what their views were on the desirability if possible of reaching a settlement with the Rhodesian regime other than one based on Nibmar. Subsequently, both Mr. MacDonald and Sir John Nicholls

set down their considered views on this subject on paper at Mr. Thomson's suggestion. In addition, Sir John Nicholls subsequently wrote a second memorandum commenting on Mr. MacDonald's paper expressing his views.

2. The papers referred to in the preceding paragraph were sent to various posts in Africa and elsewhere, and certain Heads of Missions have commented upon them. The following paragraphs summarise very briefly the various views which have been expressed.

Mr. Malcolm MacDonald

3. Mr. MacDonald argued that if Her Majesty's Government broke their pledges to the Commonwealth, particularly over Nibmar, e.g. by reaching a settlement based on a 'Tiger' type constitution, this would lead to the crippling of the Commonwealth and to a marked reduction in British influence in the world. He urged that H.M.G. should stick to the Nibmar pledge, and aim at a solution putting off majority rule (and therefore independence) for ten to fifteen years. He recognised that sanctions might prove ineffective in achieving a satisfactory settlement but held that this did not impair the validity of his advice:

'If and when it became accepted that sanctions had failed to overthrow the rebel regime, we should at least still be on the side of the overwhelming majority of nations in the Commonwealth and the United Nations who stand for the principle of equality and brotherhood among the different races in the human family round the Earth. We should remain on the side of the 'angels' who sustain that principle, and not go over to the side of the 'devils' who practice tyrannous racial superiority by one race. In fact, if it does come to that, honourable defeat will be better for us than a dishonourable settlement in Rhodesia.'

Sir John Nicholls

4. The gist of both Sir John Nicholls' papers was that we could not hope to get a satisfactory settlement, and had to choose between making the best one available and accepting the perpetuation of the damage being done to our interests as a result of our current policies. His views are summed up in the following quotation:

'For all these reasons we ourselves believe that the policy of the long haul advocated by Mr. MacDonald in his memorandum would be contrary to British interests, since it holds out the prospect of increasing humiliation and ultimate defeat. Although we share Mr. MacDonald's view that we are now unlikely to get a good settlement, we believe that even if one that was only moderately satisfactory could be reached we would do much better to cut our losses and settle for that.'

Mr. Hennings

5. In a letter to Sir John Nicholls commenting on his papers, Mr. Hennings,¹ after setting out his general views of the situation, made two suggestions:—

- (i) we should try to make the commercial community in Rhodesia see that the regime's course is leading to political isolation and economic stagnation so that

¹ See 213, note.

they should begin to see the attraction of a period of transition to majority rule and independence under a 'Tiger' constitution (adopted temporarily to a condition of dependence). For that reason, Mr. Hennings considered that we should now set out the terms on which we would envisage a settlement in some detail and let them lie on the table so that the essential reasonableness of our position was available for all to see. (Comment: similar suggestions have often been made but it has never yet been found possible to specify terms for a settlement which would not either on the one hand seriously disturb the other African Governments or else on the other hand appear to most people in this country to have been deliberately designed to make a settlement impossible.)

(ii) Nothing could in Mr. Hennings' view be more harmful to the regime's purposes than for the world, including in particular South Africa, to get bored with them and leave them to stew in their own juice. For this reason he hoped that if the rest of the world, and in particular Black Africa, could be brought to accept that we were honestly not going to sell out, we could avoid both a sell-out in Rhodesia and an escalation of the problem in a way that would endanger our relations with South Africa.

Lord Caradon

6. At the meeting of the MISC.181 Committee under the Lord Chancellor's chairmanship on 2 January, Lord Caradon argued strongly that we should not despair of the effectiveness of the sanctions policy at least until comprehensive mandatory sanctions had been introduced by the Security Council together with United Nations machinery for following up cases in which Member States appeared to be permitting breaches of them.

*Sir Patrick Dean*²

7. In a letter to Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, Sir Patrick Dean commented that it would certainly be very difficult to get the United States Government to give any open support to any settlement which we might make with Mr. Smith (assuming that it was not based on Nibmar). He thought that the best we could probably hope for would be a non-committal silence. On the other hand, he thought that if the hypothetical settlement led to the end of sanctions this would have great advantages in the eyes of President Johnson and Mr. Rusk, particularly as removing one source of friction between the Administration and Congress. And he did not agree with Mr. MacDonald's suggestion that if we reached a settlement of the 'Tiger' type, the U.S. Government would rate us lower in world affairs in general or pay less attention to our interests outside Africa. (Comment: it should be noted that Sir Patrick Dean's remarks would not necessarily apply to any form of 'disengagement' which left sanctions still in force and therefore still forming a source of friction between the Administration and Congress.)

British High Commissioner in Uganda

8. In a letter commenting on Mr. MacDonald's paper, Mr. David Scott³ said that President Obote and other African leaders who thought like him were probably highly sceptical of our ability to master the Rhodesian problem because we had ruled

² UK ambassador at Washington.

³ See 262.

out the only two methods (force or a confrontation with South Africa) which could make it succeed; but he believed all the same that they would so much prefer us to continue the long haul—however hopeless—that they would avoid asking too many searching questions about the long term realism of our present policy or the practical results achieved by it. If we presented them with a situation in which they could not avoid taking a public stand, he believed they would be highly critical and might make public gestures such as breaking diplomatic relations or leaving the Commonwealth, even though they almost certainly recognised that this would not be in their own best interests. He accordingly believed that in their eyes the ‘long haul’ policy at least had the merit of not obliging them to take up a dramatic public stand that would damage their relations with us and might well also damage their own domestic position.

British High Commissioner in Zambia

8. In a letter commenting on Sir John Nicholls’ comments on Mr. MacDonald’s paper, Mr. Pumphrey⁴ has pointed out that for the Zambians, Nibmar—while essential so far as it goes—neither affects the reality of Smith’s de facto independence nor shows how the achievement of majority rule can be secured. He added that the Zambians would not agree that we had been honourably defeated (using Mr. MacDonald’s phraseology) if we had not used a full economic blockade and/or physical force. Against this background he warned that if the Zambians were faced with a conclusion which they regarded as dishonourable we could not necessarily count on their reactions being confined to what they might calculate would not harm their own long-term interests (e.g. leaving the Commonwealth, reducing the level of diplomatic relations or breaking them on the suspicion that O.S.A.S. and technical assistance would continue). He thought it possible that they would abandon or be unable to enforce calculation and restraint, that the ‘brittle veneer’ of racial tolerance might crack, and the consequent violence against expatriates might quickly reduce Zambia’s administration and economy to enduring chaos. He thought this possibility greater in the context of a bilateral accommodation or surrender than in the context of some sort of internationalisation of the problem.

⁴ J L Pumphrey, high commissioner, Zambia, 1967–1971.

227 PREM 13/2318, no 6a

15 Feb 1968

[Evasion of sanctions]: letter from J R Williams¹ to A M Palliser

You spoke to me on 5th February about the Prime Minister’s suggestion that we should let other Commonwealth Governments have the names of firms (British as well as foreign) engaged in evasions of sanctions, as well as the particulars of the countries involved. As you requested, I enclose an annotated list of British and foreign firms whose names have come up in this connection.²

These lists have been compiled largely from information provided from extremely delicate sources, and in many cases the information is circumstantial. As a result, the

¹ Private secretary to Mr Thomson.

² Not printed.

lists as they stand could not be passed on to other governments, and need to be handled with the greatest care. Where the evidence was sufficient to justify prosecution, we would, of course, prosecute if the firm involved were subject to British law (and we have recently had some successful prosecutions): in the case of a foreign firm we would try to get the government in question to launch a prosecution. We believe that if the evidence were adequate most foreign governments would do this.

In most cases, however, the evidence does not amount to more than suspicion that sanctions are being evaded. In many cases which, under current procedures, we bring to the attention of other Commonwealth Governments we do mention the name of the firm or the ship involved to enable the government in question to investigate the case. Even this can sometimes produce difficulties. For example, we recently asked the Uganda Government to look into a report that a German airline had disposed of an airliner to Rhodesia. The airliner was believed to be one passing through Uganda and the Ugandans delayed it for a short time before it was proved that it had not been sold to Rhodesia and that its transit through Uganda was perfectly innocuous. Even this minor incident led the Germans to ask whether we are trying to stimulate Commonwealth Governments to blacklist foreign firms supposed to be evading sanctions.³ The German reaction would have no doubt been considerably stronger if the Ugandans had in fact taken some form of blacklisting action. This suggests that some caution is necessary when passing on the names of the firms believed to be involved in the cases which we bring to the attention of Commonwealth Governments, and that the question whether to do so or not needs to be settled on the individual merits of each case.

As I mentioned to you on the telephone, there is an additional point in connection with some large British firms which have subsidiaries operating in Rhodesia. Some of these Rhodesian subsidiaries are evidently involved in sanctions breaking activities, (e.g. in the exporting of asbestos), but are not under the control of their United Kingdom parent companies. It is obviously important that in mentioning Rhodesian subsidiaries to other governments we should not give any impression that the parent companies (whose names are often closely similar to those of their Rhodesian subsidiaries) have been engaged in objectionable activities. Even so and however careful we may be, there is an unavoidable risk that mention of the subsidiary could create prejudice against the parent company and so damage its legitimate operations in the country concerned.

³ Mr Wilson commented in the margin against this sentence, 'I hope we gave them a very firm reply—why shouldn't we do so?'

228 CAB 148/35, OPD 5(68)1

8 Mar 1968

**'Rhodesia: future policy': Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy
Committee minutes on the options open to the UK**

[At the prime minister's suggestion, a small group of ministers was appointed in Dec 1967 to consider the possibilities of disengagement from Rhodesia. It was chaired by Lord Gardiner, the lord chancellor. Wilson had in mind the possibility Britain might end its jurisdictional responsibility for Rhodesia; if this could be achieved Britain would have no more responsibility for Rhodesia, or for applying and enforcing sanctions, than any other

major UN member (CAB 164/117, nos 2 & 3). The committee reported on 1 Mar 1968. It ruled out a unilateral abandonment of British responsibility for Rhodesia as this would be regarded as a surrender to the illegal regime. The reaction in the Commonwealth and black Africa would be hostile. Direct action against UK economic interests and even violence against British nationals could not be ruled out. The committee also decided against applying to place Rhodesia under UN trusteeship as this would require a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly. There was no prospect that a trusteeship proposal would command any support at the UN and the committee considered any other attempt to involve the UN more deeply in Rhodesia's affairs would only add to Britain's difficulties. Britain therefore faced two broad alternatives: partial disengagement or 'quietism', and 'activism'. 'Quietism' was described as a 'covert policy': 'It minimises the political and economic burdens within the limits imposed by the need to maintain our present policies in public'. It was seen as a first step towards reaching a position whereby Britain would have no more responsibility for Rhodesia than any other UN member. 'Activism' involved keeping up the pressure on Rhodesia in order to reach a settlement. Logically the next step against the regime would be a call for comprehensive mandatory sanctions. The committee declined to make a recommendation in favour of one of the two alternatives (FCO 36/183; also FCO 35/173.)

The Committee had before them a memorandum by the Lord Chancellor (OPD(68) 15) on Rhodesia: Alternative Policies.

The Prime Minister said that the meeting had originally been called to consider the results of a study by a group of Ministers under the chairmanship of the Lord Chancellor of the possibility of terminating our special jurisdictional responsibility for Rhodesia. The report was a valuable one, particularly in relation to the case for the imposition of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia. But the situation which we faced on Rhodesia had greatly altered as a result of the executions¹ which had been carried out by the regime there in defiance of the exercise of the Royal Prerogative of Mercy. We could not at this stage usefully consider what our long-term policy towards Rhodesia should be nor, as Sir Alec Douglas-Home had recognised,² could there now be any question of following up the proposals for a settlement which he had brought back from his recent visit to Rhodesia. The Committee should consider what action we should take in the United Nations where criticism was being directed more strongly against ourselves than against the illegal regime in Rhodesia. Our objective in the United Nations should be to limit action to what was tolerable to our interests and in particular to avoid a resolution of the Security Council which would not only impose comprehensive mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia but also involve action against Portugal and South Africa; such a resolution might become inevitable later and we might have to reserve our position on it. We should also seek to ensure that the responsibility for policing sanctions, which we ourselves were undertaking at present, was placed on the United Nations Secretary-General.

¹ See 229.

² Sir A Douglas-Home visited Rhodesia in Feb 1968. The settlement he proposed after talks with Smith envisaged a lower house of 65 seats (35 'A' roll, 15 'B' roll and 15 special European), and a Senate of 24 (6 chiefs, 6 elected Africans elected by all Africans on the 'A' roll including chiefs and headmen, and 12 Europeans). All senators were to be over the age of forty. 67 votes would be required to amend an entrenched clause (three-quarters of 89). A minimum of 15,000 Africans were entitled to register on the 'A' roll. If they exercised their rights they would win at least two seats, with the result that if the elected Africans voted as a block they could prevent any amendment to an entrenched clause, even if all the chiefs voted with the Europeans. Smith was prepared to risk this as he believed the 'A' roll Africans would act responsibly and not block amendments put forward 'for the good of all races'. For this reason he wanted elected African senators elected by the 'A' roll Africans as this would ensure 'only responsible Africans' would be elected to the Senate. Appeals would to the Rhodesian Appellate Court only (PREM 13/2320).

The Commonwealth Secretary said that, in common with others, his natural inclination was that we should react strongly to recent events in Rhodesia; but this would not be wise. For the long-term, the limitations on our ability to act effectively against the regime and the problems that would arise from further action by the United Nations, pointed to a policy under which we would maintain our principles and continue to treat the illegal regime as an outlaw but to limit further action against them. In the short run, however, such a policy was impracticable. The events which had already taken place, and the prospect that the regime would carry out further executions, perhaps as many as 50 or 60, meant that we faced a very difficult period. We should have to consider accepting the imposition of comprehensive mandatory sanctions on which there had been a consensus in the Commonwealth Sanctions Committee. In one sense this would not present difficulties for us since our own sanctions were already comprehensive and other countries would be forced to follow our example. As regards South Africa, he considered that we should be able to maintain the position, which was well known to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers and in the United Nations, that we could not accept a confrontation with South Africa. Although comprehensive mandatory sanctions could be expected to have only a limited effect on the Rhodesian economy, the psychological effect of imposing them would be important particularly in present circumstances.

In discussion there was general agreement that it was not possible at present to reach decisions on long-term policy for Rhodesia. We should not be able to avoid reacting to the recent executions, but we should not make meaningless gestures against the regime and should seek to avoid developments which would threaten our wider interests or restrict our freedom on long-term policy towards Rhodesia. Our main immediate problems in following this course lay in the developments that were taking place in the United Nations. The Commonwealth representatives there were more interperate and irresponsible than their Foreign Ministers or Heads of Government; and it might therefore be desirable for the Foreign Secretary himself to go to New York in order to establish our political leadership and attract more responsible representatives from other countries. The Security Council was not yet formally seized of the Rhodesian question; but the United Kingdom Representative at the United Nations, Lord Caradon, believed the Council would meet to discuss it some time in the week beginning 11th March. The view was expressed that we should ourselves consider proposing a resolution for comprehensive mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia in an attempt to retain control of the situation which might otherwise get out of hand in the emotional atmosphere of New York. It might also be desirable to try to engage the United Nations in a greater degree of responsibility for Rhodesia. In particular we should consider passing to the Secretary-General intelligence about breaches of sanctions; and leaving to the United Nations the task of checking and following up evasions, which we had hitherto performed ourselves. From the point of view of our general strategy towards Rhodesia, there were strong reasons against our proposing comprehensive mandatory sanctions. But the situation had radically changed as a result of the recent executions and the indignation which they had aroused throughout the world, and it might now be tactically desirable for us to do so. The governing factor in our tactical handling of the developing situation in New York must be to retain control and try to ensure that any resolution that came forward did not contain unacceptable provisions, for example, concerning enforcement measures or possible action against South Africa.

In the present atmosphere in New York it might not be easy to ensure that any resolution took account of our position on South Africa. Attention was drawn to the risk that if we did not satisfy African opinion in the United Nations we might find ourselves in isolation with Portugal and South Africa; the African States might again break off diplomatic relations with us; and the white population in Africa might be in danger. On the other hand it would be wrong to allow our long-term policy to be determined by short-term pressures and we must be careful not to create new problems for ourselves. If we took the initiative in proposing comprehensive mandatory sanctions, it might be more difficult for us to oppose consequential action against South Africa. There was also the risk of offending European countries whose friendship we needed in the context of our European policy, although European Governments had so far shown themselves co-operative when we had reported to them on breaches of sanctions by their nationals. We should also be careful not to put ourselves in a position where we were obliged to assume new commitments for the enforcement of sanctions.

It was pointed out that the purpose of sanctions was not merely to satisfy opinion in New York, but primarily to bring pressure to bear on the population of Rhodesia and to make life so uncomfortable for them that there would be a change of regime. We should therefore re-examine the possibility of stopping the flow of oil to Rhodesia and in particular of reviving the plan for oil rationing in Mozambique which had failed because the French oil company, *Compagnie Française de Pétrole*, which was the main supplier of oil to the territory, had refused to co-operate. Other means of bringing pressure to bear on the Rhodesian population might be to jam the radio transmissions of the Rhodesian Broadcasting service and to stop the supply of television material to Rhodesia. Some objection was seen to jamming on grounds of principle and because it might merely lead to further demands for action on our part against Rhodesia. It was recalled that it had been decided in 1967 not to jam broadcasts to Rhodesia because the British Broadcasting Corporation had been completely unwilling to co-operate and the danger that it might have exposed Botswana to Rhodesian retaliation. On the other hand, arrangements could be made immediately to stop the supply of television material to Rhodesia if this was thought necessary. It was suggested that television material might be included among the items covered by any new United Nations resolution on mandatory sanctions.

As regards our long-term policy towards Rhodesia it was pointed out that the issues raised in the Lord Chancellor's paper were still relevant in the new situation; and it would be desirable to take some view on the merits of a policy of 'quietism' in the sense of ceasing to take unilateral initiatives against the illegal regime and of gradually easing ourselves from the lead in action against it. On the one hand it was argued in favour of 'quietism' that we could not hope to achieve our strategic objective of restoring legality in Rhodesia by a policy of sanctions within the limits we had set ourselves. During the last two years the policy of sanctions had been pursued at considerable economic and moral cost to ourselves, but we had made no progress towards our objective. We had decided to adopt a policy of disengagement in the Far East and there was even more reason to do so in Africa, which in world terms was much less important. On the other hand, it was argued that we could not escape our international and legal responsibilities for Rhodesia. The question of race relations was the most vital issue of this century; and in the present tide of opinion a policy of secret disengagement was impossible. 'Quietism' involved giving up our

long-term objective of bringing down the illegal regime. Although this might be impractical at present, we ought at least to do everything possible to avoid creeping recognition of the regime, and to ensure that it remained outlawed from the international community. 'Quietism' had the additional disadvantage that it involved pretending in public that our policy was different from what it really was. 'Quietism' might have been tolerable if the illegal regime had not taken action to affront world opinion; but in present circumstances it was out of the question. For these reasons, it was argued that the right policy should be a 'long haul' involving intensification of sanctions and a greater degree of United Nations responsibility for them, while at the same time keeping the door open for a negotiated settlement in the future.

In discussion of the internal situation in Rhodesia it was pointed out that there was little chance of the liberal opposition achieving power. But there was still some possibility of a split in the present regime and in the ruling Rhodesia Front Party. The seven-hour Cabinet meeting on 5th March suggested divisions in the regime; and Mr. Smith was known to be divided from some of his colleagues on the issue of the declaration of a republic.³ If Mr. Smith himself was removed from office, the situation would be radically altered; and there was a chance that the Armed Forces might be prepared to play a part in upsetting the regime. Meanwhile there was a hope that the position of the regime would be gradually undermined, especially in consequence of the economic stagnation resulting from the sanctions policy. Consideration should be given to the possibility of encouraging opposition from those sections of Rhodesian opinion which were opposed to the recent decisions of the regime. In particular, the Lord Chancellor might consider whether Sir Robert Tredgold, the former Chief Justice of Rhodesia, who was known to be opposed to the actions of the regime, should be invited to come to this country and make a public statement of his position.

In further discussion the following points were made:—

- (a) If there were further executions our public reaction should be on the same lines as it had been to the executions which had already taken place.
- (b) The legal position of the present regime in Rhodesia was likely to be challenged in the near future before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

The Prime Minister, summing up the discussion, said that it seemed clear that we faced a long haul in Rhodesia. It was not possible at this stage to take decisions on our long-term policy towards Rhodesia although it remained a firm objective to avoid action which would lead to an economic confrontation with South Africa. We should avoid meaningless gestures against the regime; and, although recent events in

³ In Feb 1967 a Constitutional Commission (the Whaley Commission) was appointed in Rhodesia and reported in Apr 1968. It rejected majority rule but proposed a bicameral legislature with eventual parity of racial representation. This was too liberal for the ruling Rhodesian Front. Facing international condemnation because of the executions (see 229 & 230) and criticism from his own right-wing on constitutional matters, Smith backed a compromise on the main political issue which was approved by a narrow margin at the party congress in Sept. The constitutional status quo was to be preserved for the next five years, followed by a national parliament dominated by Europeans (most Africans would be chosen by electoral colleges of chiefs), and then three provincial assemblies dealing with communal matters for the Europeans and the Africans (the latter divided along tribal lines for the Ndebele and Mashona). The right-wing of the Rhodesian Front was still not satisfied. Led by Len Idensohn, a right-wing Rhodesian National Front was set up in Mar 1968. William Harper, the minister of internal affairs, resigned in July, and Lord Graham, the minister for external affairs and defence, resigned in Sept.

Rhodesia had ruled out any possibility of a negotiated settlement so long as the extremists in the present regime remained in power, we should not close the door on the possibility of such a settlement should the internal circumstances in Rhodesia change. We should consider whether it might be desirable at some future time to publish our own proposals for a constitutional settlement so that the people of Rhodesia and any potential opposition should know what solution was open to them. In the United Nations our tactics should be aimed at retaining control of the situation and avoiding developments there which would be against our interests and which would limit our freedom of action in the long-term. It might be that these interests would be best served if we were ourselves to sponsor a resolution in the Security Council to impose comprehensive mandatory sanctions in terms which would avoid, or at least delay, moves against South Africa and Portugal, who could be expected to refuse to impose such sanctions.⁴ But no decision could be taken on this possibility, or on our tactics generally, until it was clearer how matters were likely to develop in the United Nations. He would consider with the Foreign Secretary and the other Ministers concerned what action we should take in the light of developments in the situation and of the discussion in the Committee.

Although Sir Humphrey Gibbs, the Governor of Rhodesia, was in a very difficult and isolated position, it would be greatly against our interests for him to withdraw from Salisbury since this would be regarded as a considerable psychological victory for the regime. Finally, since the attempt to reach agreement with the Conservative Opposition in Parliament on a joint resolution condemning the regime for the recent executions had failed, the Government should themselves put down such a resolution as a basis for a possible debate on Rhodesia later.

The Committee:—

Took note with approval of the Prime Minister's summing up of their discussion.

⁴ The UN Security Council unanimously passed a resolution imposing mandatory sanctions on Rhodesia on 29 May 1968 (cf 231, note 6).

229 PREM 13/2321

14 Mar 1968

[Executions]: letter from President Kaunda to Mr Wilson expressing concern that Rhodesia will be turned into a 'slaughter-house'

In view of the recent executions in Rhodesia carried out by the rebel regime I find it imperative to contact you at what I consider a very critical period in the Rhodesian issue.¹ The last executions were carried out this week on Monday. Since then we have heard that the 4 whose executions were stayed have been reprieved along with 35 others. I perfectly understand the political meaning of the executions and the reprieves. Quite obviously the Smith regime is deliberately using the Africans now in death cells to demonstrate that it is in firm control of Rhodesia in all dimensions. They can kill or reprieve as and when they want.

This is exactly why I am very worried about the new developments in which Africans are being used as mere pawns in the political game between yourself and Mr. Smith. I am worried that innocent human life should be exposed to such an exercise

¹ See 230 for background.

in an aimless trial of strength when there are better methods of resolving the problem. I am also worried that what I thought would come about is becoming a reality. You are aware of my objections to all the methods which have been applied so far. You will recall my objections to the Tiger Constitution which would have left the 100 or so Africans now in death cells in exactly the position they are today. The biggest lesson which the executions in Salisbury have brought out clearly is that as soon as the Smith regime gains recognition of its independence either by negotiations with the British Government or by other means yet to be discovered, Rhodesia will be turned into a 'slaughter-house' for hundreds of Africans not only in the concentration camps but indeed elsewhere within Rhodesia. The only crime the Africans are committing is their call for that which you and I want, namely, justice, freedom of movement, freedom of organisation and all the other freedoms which people in Britain and in Zambia enjoy. They want to participate in full in the shaping of the destiny of the 150,000 square miles of land in which they were born and are destined to die. Left alone, Mr. Smith and his fellow rebels will not spare the innocent life. The recent executions and the reprieves are likely to be followed by more executions in the next few days. This is, I fear, one of the greatest tragedies in the Rhodesian issue. Can the British Government leave these Africans waiting in queues to be executed? It really pains me.

In my view this is a very ideal moment for strong and effective action by the British Government in order to resolve the Rhodesian issue and crush the rebellion once and for all. There can be no other way of stopping the executions in Rhodesia which are likely to be more indiscriminate after Smith has clearly seen the impotence of the British Government to stop him from doing what he wants at his own discretion. Having tried all the methods short of comprehensive mandatory sanctions and the use of force, quite frankly, if it is really the desire of the British Government to fulfil their moral commitments to the 4 million Africans and their commitments to freedom of human beings everywhere in the world, there is no alternative but to resort to either of these two methods.

So far as my Government is concerned we still urge for the use of force NOW while the world still stands in a state of shock about the atrocities committed by the Smith regime. This would have been the opportune moment, and my Government still stands ready to offer whatever facilities are available in this exercise. I am merely reiterating what I said even before U.D.I. and an offer which has been repeated several times over since then. If this is still unacceptable to you, in all honesty I can see no other alternative but to resort to the United Nations for the imposition of comprehensive mandatory sanctions under Articles 41 and 42 of Chapter 7 of the Charter. Your country ought to take the lead in the United Nations on this matter. The point is any attempt merely to extend the list of items under the Selective Mandatory Sanctions resolution passed by the United Nations in December, 1966 would not solve the problem posed by South Africa and Portugal in their assistance of the Smith regime. These are the real problems in this exercise and they will do everything possible to frustrate your efforts and mine and indeed the efforts of all men of goodwill in the international community to bring justice to bear on the rebellious leaders in Rhodesia.

The purpose of my writing to you is to once again appeal to you for urgent action. Compromise solutions which leave the situation as it is; solutions which leave Smith in control, certainly do nothing to resolve the problems and to save the fate of the

hundreds of Africans in the concentration camps and others who are likely to fall into Smith's booby trap in the name of Law and Order Maintenance Acts and other inhuman laws enacted since U.D.I. Should we save these lives we shall have done mankind the greatest honour and our contribution to human development will be memorable. If we fail, it will be difficult to escape responsibility for the tragic consequences which are likely to follow.

I have written this letter in a spirit of frankness with which I have approached you in the past and I do hope that you will take it in a similar manner.

230 FCO 36/28, no 203

15 Mar 1968

'Rhodesia: executions and sentences': outward FO and Commonwealth Office guidance telegram no 72 to certain missions and dependent territories

[When Lardner-Burke made his announcement on 31 Aug 1967, the Commonwealth Office issued an immediate press statement to the effect that the carrying out of a death sentence without the confirmation and notification required by law 'would itself be murder imposing the heaviest personal responsibility on everybody who took part in it' (FCO 36/25, no 26, outward tel no 907, Commonwealth Office to Salisbury, 31 Aug 1967). Another Commonwealth Office telegram to Salisbury (no 908) sent on the same day read: 'We are anxious to bring to personal attention of Sheriffs, Prison Governors etc, likely to be involved in execution of death sentences the warning contained in tonight's Press statement. Please provide as accurate list as you can of names or appointments and addresses to which it could be sent by direct telegrams' (*ibid*, no 27).]

World attention has been focused on the execution by the illegal régime in Rhodesia of five Africans and on the fate of the other Africans who remain under sentence of death. The following material may be used at your discretion.

Background

On 31 August, 1967, Mr. Lardner-Burke, the so called Minister of Law and Order in Rhodesia, announced that the régime had decided to review the cases of the 82 persons then under sentence and to execute those not reprieved (there had been no executions since I.D.I.) When making this announcement he said that, as a result of an initial review, it had been decided to reprieve three men and to execute three others.

2. Those to be executed included James Ndhlamini and Victor Mlambo sentenced to death on 14 December, 1964, under the mandatory provisions of the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act for setting, or attempting to set, fire to persons; in fact they were involved in a road block ambush of a Mr. Oberholzer, who was attacked and killed with knives, stones and petrol bombs. His wife and child, who were present, were saved by the next passer-by. The third man, Duly Shadreck, was convicted and sentenced to death on 27 September, 1965, for the murder of an African.

3. Under pre-I.D.I. legislation an execution can only lawfully be carried out if the Governor has first considered whether to exercise the Royal Prerogative of Mercy on The Queen's behalf, and if he decides not to do so, has then formally confirmed the sentence. Since this had not been done in this particular case by the Governor but by Mr. Clifford Dupont, the régime's 'Officer administering the Government', proceedings were started immediately on behalf of the three men to prevent the

executions being carried out. On 23 September, 1967, a High Court judge refused a permanent interdict against the carrying out of the executions but allowed a temporary interdict pending appeal. This appeal was heard from 26 to 28 February. The appeal was based not only on the constitutional position of the régime and of the 'Officer Administering the Government', but also on the grounds that the lapse of time in carrying out the executions constituted inhuman punishment in contravention of the Declaration of Rights incorporated in the 1961 Constitution. On 29 February 1968 the Appellate Division of the High Court rejected the appeal on the ground that they were in fact bound by the judgment of the majority of the judges in the Constitutional Case which decided (although we maintain that this decision was purely *obiter*¹ (Guidance No. 33) that the régime could do anything which the Government could legally do under the 1961 Constitution.

4. On 1 March the Appellate Division of the High Court refused an application by the three men for leave to appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. They did so on the ground that, since the régime had indicated that no judgment of the Privy Council would be obeyed by them, it would be pointless for the Appellate Division to grant leave and that it was essentially a question for the Judicial Committee itself to decide whether to hear an appeal. They also refused to grant a temporary interdict pending a direct appeal to the Privy Council, basing their refusal on the ground that, since the régime had declared its intention to proceed, irrespective of any proceedings in the Privy Council, such an interdict would itself be pointless and also 'cruel'.

Royal reprieve

5. On 2 March lawyers in England, who throughout the case had been working in collaboration with the Salisbury lawyers on behalf of the three condemned men, submitted petitions for mercy to Her Majesty The Queen through the Commonwealth Office. In view of the urgency they did this on their own initiative and without awaiting instructions from Salisbury; this was a perfectly proper procedure. (In a colony the exercise of the Royal Prerogative of Mercy is usually delegated to the Governor but The Queen retains a residual power to exercise it Herself, on the advice of the Commonwealth Secretary, though this only happens in exceptional cases.) The petitions having been submitted to Her Majesty in these circumstances, it was the constitutional duty of the Commonwealth Secretary to advise Her Majesty whether She should accede to them.

6. On receipt of the petitions, the Commonwealth Secretary did advise The Queen to reprieve the three men, which She did the same day. In each case the sentence of death was commuted to one of imprisonment for life. The reasons for this were given in the Commonwealth Secretary's statement to the House of Commons on 4 March (Hansard Col. 36) which referred to the length of time the men had been under sentence of death and the fact that the régime intended to go ahead with the hangings despite their intention to appeal direct to the Judicial Committee, which is the ultimate Court of Appeal for Rhodesia.

7. The news of the reprieve was sent to the Governor who had been in close touch with Her Majesty's Government. Telegrams were also despatched to those likely to be concerned with carrying out the executions in Rhodesia.

¹ Short for *obiter dictum*, an expression of opinion by a judge in court which plays no part in the court's decision.

8. On 4 March, application was made on behalf of the three men to the High Court, in Salisbury, seeking a permanent interdict in the light of The Queen's reprieve. This was refused by the judges who claimed that The Queen had no residual prerogative of mercy.

Executions and subsequent developments

9. The three men reprieved by The Queen, were hanged by the régime on 6 March. The régime subsequently announced that they proposed to proceed with the execution of six other men. Two of these men, Francis Chirisa and Takauyare Jeremiah, who were sentenced to death for murdering a sub-chief in October, 1964, were executed on 11 March, but the remaining four were spared. Nine cases were 'reprieved' and, on 13 March, the régime indicated that they had decided not to proceed with the execution of a further 35 men including the four who were to have been hanged on 11 March.

10. The exact number of those remaining under sentence of death is difficult to arrive at because the total includes ordinary murderers whose cases may not have been reported as well as men involved in 'terrorist' activities, whose names have been withheld for security reasons. The position after the first three hangings appeared to be that there were about 106 persons under sentence of death of whom about 65 had received sentences for offences under the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act as amended. This Act, which was passed before I.D.I., provided a mandatory death sentence for cases in which persons had used petrol or explosives against persons or residential buildings. In a number of cases when the mandatory death sentence was imposed under this Act no loss of life had occurred. The motivation was presumably political in all, or most, cases and a number of those sentenced under other laws were undoubtedly also politically motivated.

Legality of the sentences and executions

11. The laws concerned and the Courts which passed sentence were lawful, having been passed and established before I.D.I. The carrying out of executions is, however, unlawful for the reason indicated in paragraph 3 above.

12. In 1967 the illegal régime purported to amend the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act to introduce a mandatory death sentence for those found in Rhodesia in possession of 'arms of war' and sentences were passed on 12 persons under this provision in the first week of March. This amendment, having been passed since I.D.I., is invalid.

World reaction

13. Widespread indignation has been expressed at the hangings and, in a number of Afro-Asian countries, those executed have been hailed as heroes and Her Majesty's Government condemned for not having taken forceful action to bring down the régime. Resolutions were passed at the United Nations in New York by the Human Rights Committee and the Committee of 24 on 7 March. A meeting of the Security Council has been called for.

Her Majesty's Government's position

14. The Commonwealth Secretary has made a series of statements on the executions and sentences in the House of Commons (4 March Hansard cols 36-39; 5 March Hansard cols 231-234; 6 March (Verbatim No. 62); 11 March (Verbatim No. 65)). The Prime Minister has also made statements on 7 March, Hansard

cols. 652–659, and 14 March, (Verbatim No. 69). Her Majesty's Government remain opposed to the use of force (Guidance No. 290 9 November 1967 (not to all) and Verbatim No. 70). As regards other measures you should not go beyond the terms of the Prime Minister's statement of 14 March.

231 PREM 13/2351, no 14 15 Mar 1968
[Oil sanctions]: letter from D P R Mackilligan¹ to A M Palliser on the latest position

Thank you for your letter of 19th February about the Prime Minister's comments on Lusaka telegram No. 426, about the attacks on Britain over alleged breaches of the oil sanctions made by President Kaunda at his Press Conference on 15th February.

As you may have seen, we made use of a Question by Lord Brockway² in the House of Lords on 5th March to issue a rebuttal (copy attached) and we have also briefed our High Commissioner in Lusaka to take up the question with Mr. Kamanga, the Zambian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Lord Caradon in New York to answer possible criticisms in the Committee of 24.

We have discussed with the Foreign Office the Prime Minister's suggestion that we should make public the fact that the French have refused to co-operate with us in a scheme to ration oil supplies to and through Mozambique. There are two reasons why we would prefer not to take action on these lines.

The first is that it would imply willingness on our part to take effective action against Mozambique. To succeed in preventing oil delivered to Lourenço Marques getting to Rhodesia, the enforcement measures would have to extend to such a degree of control over oil supplies to other customers supplied from Lourenço Marques, especially those in the Transvaal, as would be bound to involve us in a confrontation with South Africa. At their meeting on 18th October, 1967, the Defence and Oversea Policy Committee agreed that the practical, economic and political arguments against the imposition of oil sanctions on Mozambique were overwhelming.

The second is that, although we are satisfied that British oil companies have at no time been directly involved in the supply of oil to Rhodesia through Mozambique, we now know that a good deal of the oil which is getting to Rhodesia has been coming from refined products delivered to Lourenço Marques by the French,³ British and

¹ Private secretary to Mr Thomson.

² Fenner Brockway, formerly a Labour MP and a veteran campaigner for colonial emancipation.

³ Note, however, Britain accepted French denials of CFP (see note 4 below) deliberately evading oil sanctions. In Apr 1968 the FO concluded that products sold in Lourenço Marques to South African customers by the international oil companies were being diverted by some of these customers to Rhodesia. And as CFP provided a significant proportion of the market, it seemed a reasonable assumption, though one of which the FO could not be sure, that a similar proportion of the products were of CFP origin. Diversions were probably taking place in respect of supplies delivered in Mozambique by all the international companies, although the scale of the diversions probably differed. As the letter reproduced here explains, in order to ensure that UK oil imported into Lourenço Marques did not reach Rhodesia, agreement had been reached in Feb with Shell and BP that a number of 'suspicious' contracts would be fulfilled at Lourenço Marques by supplies drawn from non-British sources. This could not be revealed to the South African government, or to the US and French oil companies and their governments. It was thus difficult to engage in frank discussion with the US and France of precisely whose products were being diverted. In the meantime the UK would have to avoid accusing the French of breaking sanctions unless clear evidence emerged to the contrary (PREM 13/3437, Maitland to Palliser, 9 Apr 1968).

U.S. oil companies. In other words, the oil which is getting through to Rhodesia does not all come from Sonarep or C.F.P.⁴ Substantial quantities of the oil ordered by some of the oil companies' customers in the Transvaal are, by long standing custom, delivered to them f.o.r. (free on rail) at Lourenço Marques. Once it has left Lourenço Marques such oil may easily be diverted to Rhodesia before it reaches South Africa, without the oil companies knowing, let alone being able to stop it. The information given to us by Shell/B.P. last year (on the basis of reports provided by their South African subsidiary) accounted for the whole of their deliveries to and through Lourenço Marques without making it clear that something between 25 and 30 per cent of their sales to customers in the Transvaal were delivered f.o.r. Lourenço Marques. However, subsequent enquiries by Shell/B.P. revealed that a good deal of the oil delivered to South African customers f.o.r. Lourenço Marques—including some delivered by Shell/B.P.—was being diverted, within Mozambique, to Rhodesia. At about the same time Shell/B.P. informed us that between 1966 and 1967 there was a 45 per cent increase in Shell/B.P. sales ex-Lourenço Marques to customers in the Transvaal (a great part of this increase is accounted for by an exchange deal under which C.F.P. provide Shell/B.P. with refined products in Lourenço Marques against the delivery of an equal quantity to C.F.P. in Durban from the Shell refinery there).

The Commonwealth Secretary saw Mr. F. S. McFadzean and The Hon. W. Fraser, Managing Directors of Shell and B.P. respectively, at their request on 21st February.⁵ You have had the record of the meeting and will remember that they said that action had been taken to prevent British oil imported into Lourenço Marques continuing to reach Rhodesia. This had been done by arranging for certain 'suspicious' contracts to be fulfilled from supplies drawn from non-British sources at Lourenço Marques. They explained that the fact that they had taken this action would have to be kept secret, not only from the South African Government, but also from their competitors, the U.S. and French oil companies and their governments. They admitted that their action would not stop the flow of oil to Rhodesia via Lourenço Marques, arguing that this could not be achieved without risking a most damaging confrontation with the South African Government.

The situation is clearly not at all satisfactory. However, it is the best we can do in present circumstances and it at least enables us to maintain truthfully that no British oil company is supplying P.O.L. to Rhodesia; and, if pressed whether P.O.L. consignments to Transvaal by British oil companies are being diverted to Rhodesia to say, with honesty, that we have looked into this possibility and are satisfied that this is not happening (we could not say that we were satisfied that it had not happened in the past).

The fact is that there is no way of stopping all oil supplies reaching Rhodesia without the active co-operation of South Africa and Portugal. Even if it were possible, for the purposes of a rationing scheme, to determine the requirements of South Africa and Mozambique themselves and the other countries served by Beira and Lourenço Marques (i.e. Malawi, Zambia, the Transvaal, Swaziland and Botswana), the needs of Rhodesia under rationing are relatively small by comparison with the

⁴ Sociedade Nacional de Rafinazo de Petroleo, a Franco-Portuguese syndicate which established the Lourenço Marques oil refinery; Compagnie Française des Pétroles (Total since 1991).

⁵ The record of this meeting is at PREM 13/2351, no 7A. It was shown to Wilson by Palliser, the prime minister marking it with a green tick but making no comment.

legitimate requirements of the territories mentioned, so that it would still not be possible to prevent supplies being diverted to Rhodesia without stationing observers on Portuguese and South African territory. In present circumstances it is inconceivable that either South Africa or Portugal would even contemplate such action. And any attempt to enforce a rationing scheme would require the agreement of at least the French and United States Governments to their joining with us in an outright economic confrontation with Portugal and South Africa.⁶

⁶ Wilson noted at the top of Mackilligin's letter, 'This is overtaken by this morning's decision', a reference to a miscellaneous meeting (MISC 204(68)1st meeting) on 20 Mar 1968 at which ministers decided that, despite the risks, the UK should at least agree to, if not actually to initiate, the introduction of a UN resolution calling for mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia. The aim would be to avoid being faced with an extreme Afro-Asian resolution Britain could not support. Wilson suggested pressure be brought to bear both on France and Portugal to co-operate in a scheme of rationing to supply Mozambique with only so much oil as would service its own needs. Ministers were sceptical, assuming a rationing scheme would increase the pressure for similar measures against South Africa. The meeting called for a further urgent study of the action needed to prevent oil supplies reaching Rhodesia (PREM 13/2351, no 13, note for prime minister, 20 Mar 1968). Stewart presented the findings by officials in a report to the DOPC (CAB 148/36, OPD(68)23, 26 Mar 1968). The report concluded there were only two ways of stopping oil reaching Rhodesia through Mozambique: a total blockade (which practically was not possible), or a scheme of rationing requiring the cooperation of Portugal, South Africa, France, and the oil companies, to which all those concerned were opposed. In the DOPC the balance of opinion was that 'the risks involved in seeking to tighten oil sanctions against Rhodesia heavily outweighed the advantages'. Wilson was left to suggest, at the next meeting of Commonwealth prime ministers, Commonwealth countries might be urged to turn their criticism away from Britain and towards Portugal and France (CAB 148/35, OPD 7(68)3, 28 Mar 1968).

232 PREM 13/2332 26 Apr 1968 **[British Lions]: letter from Mr Howell¹ to A N Halls² on a forthcoming game at Bulawayo during the British Lions rugby tour of South Africa**

[The Lions 1968 tour of South Africa was announced in 1966. Both the FO and the Commonwealth Office made unsuccessful attempts to prevent the team fulfilling its single fixture in Rhodesia. To put pressure on the home rugby unions in the UK the FO suggested in 1967 withdrawing government financial support; the FO rejected the view that sport and politics had no connection (FCO 36/321, no 27, J Henniker to Sir L Monson, 19 Oct 1967). In 1968, the Commonwealth Office considered whether employers (especially local education authorities for players who were teachers) might be persuaded to refuse leave of absence to players chosen for the tour (*ibid*, J R Williams to A M Palliser, 22 Apr 1968). Both actions were dropped because it was thought they would create ill-feeling and bad publicity, and replacements would always be found for players denied leave of absence.]

Thank you for your letter concerning the British Lions tour of South Africa. As you say I have been much involved in trying to persuade them not to play a match in Rhodesia during their tour and I asked their Secretary to convey the strong views of H.M.G. to his colleagues as well as my own personal views. Regrettably, our view did not prevail.

The Prime Minister will appreciate the line that I have taken throughout, which is

¹ D H Howell, parliamentary under-secretary of state, Department of Education and Science, with responsibility for sport, 1964–1969.

² 'Michael Halls', principal private secretary to Wilson.

that it is equally wrong for sport to be used for political ends—as Rhodesia is constantly trying to do—as for there to be any political interference in sport. It is an exceedingly delicate balance to maintain but we have managed to succeed for three and a half years and I feel that a boycott of rugby internationals would have grave dangers in so far as this policy is concerned. It is bound to become public knowledge and we can rely upon every sporting journalist to jump on this bandwagon to the detriment of the Government position.

The Rugby people make two main points:—

Firstly, so long as it is perfectly legal for individuals to travel to and from Rhodesia they do not intend that sport should be exempted. If the proposed ban on travel to Rhodesia became operative before the tour commenced, it might enable us to do something, but from enquiries I have made, this seemed unlikely.

Secondly, the Lions say that Rhodesia is not recognised as a separate country for rugby purposes; it is a province attached to South Africa and by tradition one match is always played at Bulawayo. I pointed out the obvious attempts that will be made to ‘use’ the team whilst they are there. In the end they assured me that they had no intention of allowing themselves to be so used and they would travel up to Bulawayo and return immediately and intended to refuse any offer of Rhodesian Government hospitality. I do not think it is possible to get them to go further.

Finally, any boycott by Ministers can have no effect until about 1969 when the next international rugby season starts and will certainly be very remote from the Lions tour.

On balance I strongly support the views of the Commonwealth Secretary that nothing more can be done that is likely to achieve a positive result and that things should be played as quietly as possible. The one match in Rhodesia should be treated as an annoying, but insignificant factor—particularly if the organisers observe their undertaking referred to above.

233 PREM 13/2324, no 13

19 Aug 1968

[Goodman and Aitken]: personal telegram no 2 from Mr Wilson to Mr Thomson on a secret visit to see Mr Smith by Lord Goodman and Mr Aitken

[Having already sounded out Smith about the conditions under which the two leaders might meet again (see ‘talking points’ in PREM 13/2323), Wilson despatched Lord Goodman, a close friend and legal adviser, and Max Aitken, a former Conservative MP and chairman of Beaverbrook Newspapers who had served with Smith in the RAF during WWII, on a secret visit to see Smith in Salisbury in Aug 1968. In public it was said Aitken was on a business trip to South Africa, with Goodman advising him on the legal aspects. No secret was made of the fact Aitken would also be visiting Rhodesia (what he would be doing was not revealed) but absolute secrecy surrounded Goodman’s Salisbury visit. In the tel reproduced here, which was sent from his holiday location on the Scilly Isles off the Cornish coast, Wilson explained in code what had transpired at meetings between Smith on the one hand, and Goodman and Aitken on the other, on 14 and 15 Aug (for a full record, see PREM 13/2323, no 22). In a separate note sent to Wilson on the Scillies on 18 Aug, Goodman emphasised that throughout the encounter, Smith had insisted time and again he would not be humiliated: ‘Smith several times emphasised that he was not going to be humiliated—this with reference to the method for the return to legality. He stated that he accepted—although with personal abhorrence—the idea of majority rule in Rhodesia. As he had accepted this, and swallowed the pill, he could not see why the

difficulty was being made about “the return to legality” (PREM 13/2323, no 29). The code words used in this telegram (PREM 13/2324, no 13) are as follows:

Beaver	Aitken	Grouse	Douglas-Home
Ruritania	Rhodesia	Lords Corridor	Privy Council
Transylvania	South Africa	Latey	majority rule
Monkey	Smith	State of Grace	constitutional rule
Retriever	Goodman	Fifth Avenue	fifth principle
Bishop	Governor of Rhodesia	St. Bernard	Maudling
Weasel	Dupont	Headmasters	chief justices
Leopard	Tiger	Toad	Lardner-Burke
Rabbits	African chiefs.]		

In this telegram for security reasons the personalities involved are described by pseudonyms and my Office will supply yours with a code so you can identify them.

1. You will remember I mentioned to you that Beaver was intending to visit Ruritania as part of a business trip he was paying to Transylvania. As I told you I had a couple of discussions with him to make sure that any discussions he might have with Monkey made quite clear to the latter where we stood on the basis of your speech and mine of last March. I was particularly anxious that there should be no get together between them putting pressure on me. As a further precaution I suggested that Retriever who was joining him in Transylvania for the business part of the trip should if necessary join Beaver if any discussion were arranged with Monkey. I suggested this should if possible be either in Transylvania or in a part of Ruritania away from the capital and that in any case it was paramount that there should be the most complete security about Retriever's presence. I briefed Retriever separately and even more pointedly than in the discussions with Beaver. Both however agreed that the general line I was taking which closely followed your line last November was eminently fair and reasonable and Beaver went so far as to say to me before he left that if this were not accepted he would not again support Monkey. Both agreed to make it clear at all points that they were not there in any official capacity and had no power to mediate or negotiate but that they were there to form their own view as to whether first Monkey genuinely wanted an agreement, second whether he was prepared to pay the price for it and third, following your instructions to Carter,¹ whether he could deliver any agreement initialled with you and me and fourth, whether he will be prepared for guarantees internal and external that there would be no variation in the agreement after they were entrusted with legal authority.

2. Beaver as you know was instructed to call on the Bishop and I entirely agree as I have asked my Office to tell yours with Bishop's request that he be put fully in the picture following the Beaver/Retriever talks with Monkey and I hope that by this time Bishop has been told that I suggested that details will shortly be on their way to him as soon as possible after Beaver's return to this country which was in fact Sunday 18th and his subsequent report to me. He was also being advised to avoid substantive meeting with Monkey until he had this background briefing.

3. In the event all my requirements for the discussions were fully honoured. Retriever has confirmed with me on the Top Secret telephone in two calls since his return that Beaver played right down the line of my instructions. It was categorically stated and repeated that these were not in any sense official talks and that Beaver and

¹ P A Carter, head of the residual UK mission in Salisbury.

Retriever had no power to talk for the Government. Equally Beaver loyally stood by the H.M.G. line backing up the more professional approach of Retriever.

4. In my briefing of the two visitors I had outlined a number of points which are set out in my immediately following telegram. These points of course carry the authority of the two visitors only though I imagine Monkey will realise that they were not purely the product of a private enterprise operation. I had in fact authorised Beaver, indeed both of them, to say I had had a chat with them.

5. The two visitors met Monkey for two and a half hours last Wednesday and a further short meeting on Thursday. Monkey was apparently unusually straightforward and serious with them. In certain respects he was extremely helpful. For example Weasel had asked Beaver to call on him but Monkey said Beaver should do no such thing.

6. Monkey emphasised his keen desire to meet again on Leopard Basis but emphasised it would be tragic if agreement could not be reached. He also stressed, in my view not unfairly, that a longer time limit should be allowed. He would have full authority to negotiate but should have our agreement if necessary to communicate with his colleagues or even return briefly to them if any additional authority were needed. Hence the need for adequate time. He guaranteed to stand by any agreement initialled and to see it through his team and subject to normal parliamentary reservations to see it through his legislature.

7. After very full discussions in which the two visitors went on emphasising the personal character of their visit his general approach could be summarised on these lines:—

(i) He would accept the broad basis of Leopard.

(ii) Since Leopard he felt more obligated to do something for the Rabbits, hence his variation in the proposals put to Grouse, but at the end of the day not without some powerful argument from Retriever on constitutional philosophy and the views of the outside world, he gave the impression that this would be negotiable but clearly he was not going to negotiate in any way except between principals.

(iii) He was also surprisingly receptive about accepting reference to Lords Corridor provided, as with other constitutions, they could opt out. Clearly he would accept time limit though we might have to insist it was either for adequate period of years or in some way related to Latey. Alternatively we might have to say such an option required joint agreement.

(iv) Monkey's greatest concern was about the second part of Leopard namely return to a state of grace. He obviously still thought or affected to think that Leopard had involved direct control by Bishop. While ruling this out he seemed ready to contemplate caretaker status pending tribunal assessment of fifth avenue test as suggested orally twenty months ago by St. Bernard. He had various suggestions for constitution of tribunal including Headmasters of Britain, New Zealand and Ruritania. (I hope he knows where he can stuff that last one.)

8. The other sticking point on which he appeared to be willing to make concessions, but only between principals, was on our requirement that any legal Government must be a Government of national unity. He was difficult about this. On being challenged by Retriever as to whether he would be prepared to see the whole possibility of agreement go in order to safeguard the political careers of two or three extreme colleagues, he came down pretty clearly in favour of receiving

representations on that point. He must know that we would have in mind Toad as well as Weasel, whereas I would have a fear that he would want to be accompanied by Toad in any discussions.

9. All in all the oral report I have had and Retriever's note of the meetings which have just reached me as I dictate this seem moderately encouraging. On reading the note, however keen Monkey is to get an agreement and however willing to make sacrifices to get it, I was appalled by the repeated evidence that his atavistic philosophy has not basically changed.

234 PREM 13/2324, no 67 13 Sept 1968
[Terms for a settlement]: personal minute (M 51/68) by Mr Wilson to Mr Stewart on the conditions for a new settlement with Mr Smith

[The immediate background to Wilson's exchange with Stewart over Rhodesia was Thomson's discussion with Vorster, the South African prime minister, at Pretoria on 1 Sept. In response to Thomson's remarks about the presence of South African forces in Rhodesia in the guerrilla war, Vorster insisted the Rhodesian and South African authorities had the measure of what he described as 'terrorists'; his forces would be withdrawn 'as soon as the situation allowed'. Thomson then emphasised that for Britain, the three most important points in any settlement were the blocking quarter, the appeal to the Privy Council, and the formation of a broad-based government. On the first, Vorster argued Smith would find it impossible to accept a blocking quarter excluding chiefs. On the second, he suggested in the light of recent events—the storm over the executions—Smith would find this unacceptable. Thomson replied on the contrary that recent events had underlined the importance of this element. On the last, Vorster said the formation of such a government would be 'an impossible undertaking for any Prime Minister': 'Appointments to Cabinets had to be made on the basis of individual qualifications and not on pigmentation.' Thomson suggested prime ministers often made appointments for reasons of political necessity as well as ability (to which Vorster grinned). The South African prime minister also argued that had Britain intervened militarily in 1965, South Africa would not have stood aside; if force were now to be used South African intervention would be 'even more certain'.¹ Vorster also made the points that he would have no objection to a black government in Rhodesia (what he objected to were 'gangs of Communists' running African states), and that if Rhodesia declared a republic, South Africa would recognise it. Vorster gave no indication of how far he was prepared to put pressure on Smith to reach a settlement but he did say he would ensure Smith kept the terms of any settlement to which he agreed. He evaded Thomson's attempts to persuade him to be more specific (PREM 13/2324, no 40a, inward telegram no 630 from Pretoria, 1 Sept 1968). Wilson and Stewart discussed Rhodesia on 12 Sept. The prime minister was optimistic, first because of Thomson's discussion with Vorster, and secondly because of the growing split within the Rhodesian Front (see 228, note 3). The foreign secretary was more cautious. His reading of the Vorster interview was that it had given no grounds for thinking Smith was ready to negotiate an acceptable settlement; on the contrary, there were no signs Smith was ready to meet Britain's three points. Stewart was also concerned Britain might suffer more through loss of prestige than Smith if negotiations failed. Wilson responded that, as in any negotiation, the UK could not expect Smith to declare his hand in advance; also there would be no negotiation unless Smith realised certain parts of it were not negotiable (PREM 13/2324, no 49, Palliser to Maitland, 12 Sept 1968).]

¹ This is at odds with the version offered by Smith during the visit to Salisbury by Gardiner and Bottomley in March 1965. The record of one meeting reads: '*Mr. Smith* said that South Africa had made clear that she was not prepared to give Rhodesia military support. She was, however, ready to give Rhodesia all such other assistance as she could. And if Rhodesia could "make a go of it on her own", South Africa would be willing in due course to incorporate her into the Republic, if Rhodesia wished this. (Mr. Smith made clear that he personally would be strongly opposed to the latter, unless driven to it.)' CAB 21/5513, record of meeting, 3 Mar 1965.

I thought that it might be helpful, in the light of our talk yesterday and of my earlier discussion with George Thomson, after his visit to South Africa, if I set out as clearly as I can how I view the present Rhodesian situation.

First, the political background.

In terms of the political situation at home there are two aspects to the question.

On our own side, there will be some who will criticise any Rhodesian agreement short of Nibmar. I would judge from the very large number of Questions I have answered on this subject that these represent only a small, though articulate, minority. Moreover, on every such occasion I have had strong support from our back-benchers for the proposition that we are not prepared to negotiate any agreement which does not satisfy the Six Principles. But the 'Six Principle' settlement is, of course—and always has been—incompatible with Nibmar, since the first two principles in particular envisage guaranteed and unimpeded progress to majority rule *after* independence. My judgement on the Party reaction is, therefore, that, while we should have severe criticism for a 'Six Principle' settlement from the minority, in general we should get overwhelming support, provided always that it was linked with a 'substantial change in circumstances' sufficient to justify an approach to the Commonwealth for a release from Nibmar, and provided that the settlement looked right, felt right—and 'smelled' right. In practical terms this means the broad-based Government we have discussed and on which we shall insist.

Clearly any settlement which did not thus satisfy the Six Principles and involves the necessary 'change in circumstances' would produce a major Party reaction. But then neither you nor I, nor any of us, could contemplate such a settlement.

In the broader political setting, we must recognise that we shall be under the strongest pressure to enter into negotiations. Indeed this began last Sunday with Douglas-Home's broadcast and is now widespread throughout the press. The strength of the Right Wing in Rhodesia, the clear decision to have a plebiscite on the proposed new Constitution, and, no doubt, the fear that Smith might be pushed out by the Right Wing will all increase the pressure on us to reach an agreement with him and thus strengthen his position before it is too late. Indeed it will be argued that time is now less than ever on our side. My one worry about the timetable on which we are working is that this demand for urgent talks could become embarrassingly strong in the next week or two.

In judging this political setting, we also have to assess the attitude of the country as a whole. I doubt if many people are aware in any detail of what the Six Principles are about, though it was encouraging that the public opinion poll taken at the time of the Lords' manoeuvre showed more support for us than we might have expected. I am, however, clear that there is a widespread feeling in the country in favour of a settlement of the Rhodesian issue and that this would therefore be of great political value. More particularly, I would feel—and you yourself expressed this when we discussed the question before your visit to Rumania—that it would be valuable in every context to get rid of this 'millstone around our necks'. In saying this I am partly influenced by my concern that this has represented, and even after the U.N. resolution still to some extent represents, a British variant of the Hallstein doctrine.²

² Walter Hallstein, law professor and foreign minister in West Germany under chancellor Konrad Adenauer (1949–1963); author of doctrine by which West Germany refused diplomatic relations with any country recognising East Germany.

I have always been anxious that, in the conduct of your broader diplomacy, you should not come under pressure to trade an important British interest for support of our Rhodesian policy. This may become much more of an issue with the U.S. after November.

Now as to the issues for early decision.

My view is that it is impossible for us to reject the principle of talks if it can persuasively be urged, particularly on the basis of evidence coming from Rhodesia, that such talks might be fruitful within the context of the six principles. A great deal has already been made of the Home proposals. At the same time it would clearly be perilous for us to engage in summit talks without a more than reasonable chance of success. We have evidence that this is also Smith's view. Indeed, after his troubles in the Party, he would surely face political annihilation if he entered on talks which failed and if it became clear subsequently that he had agreed to three-quarters of a deal which was much more unacceptable to Rhodesia Front opinion than the (to us) unacceptable Constitution which he has only narrowly got through his Party Congress.

The issue is therefore on what basis we should be prepared to agree to a summit conference. I say 'summit' because I know that Smith will not negotiate except at that level. Tiger, which nearly came off, was entered into without any prior assurances from Smith about what he would accept. I consider that we should not enter on a second Tiger on such a basis. We must have a very good prospect of success.

There are in fact three crucial issues, the blocking quarter, the Privy Council, and the broad-based Government. All of these for us are non-negotiable.

On the blocking quarter, while Smith has on occasion appeared ready to accept this in principle, he is still manoeuvring on a figure that represents something less than 25 per cent in guaranteed terms. I believe, as I mentioned to you, that there are ways in which we could make it more acceptable to him, for example, in the number of chiefs who could be in the Senate. But, at the end of the day, we cannot sign an agreement which, at the decisive point where entrenched clauses are subject to amendment, does not involve an effective blocking quarter i.e. that the number of elected Africans should be at least 25 per cent of those voting. 24.9 per cent would not do.

The Privy Council, because of the events of this year, is, Vorster tells us, an 'emotive point' for Smith. For the same reasons, it is no less a point of principle for us. From what Smith has said, I believe this point could be dealt with on terms fully acceptable to us. But, if it cannot, again there is no agreement.

I believe that the broad-based government will be the most difficult problem. Party pressures may make Smith more frightened and therefore less willing to accept our minimum terms. On the other hand, he may now be keener—and I have consistently urged him to do this—to seek the broader political base which has always been there for the asking. It should be remembered that on Tiger, he volunteered not only his desire to get rid of a number of extremists from his 'Cabinet', but also to get rid of 'thirty of his chaps' in Parliament. Recent events may have strengthened this desire—or not. Some press comment suggests that they may.

One of Smith's great anxieties, as is clear from all our more recent information, was about the return to constitutional rule. Here I think we can help him without departing from any principle we have taken up. Indeed our main problem will be to clear up misunderstandings about Tiger.

All the foregoing is designed to set out the background to the decision we shall shortly have to take, namely, whether we should enter into summit discussions or not.

Smith's current pronouncements, not least those communicated to the Commonwealth Secretary by Vorster, suggest that he is still very intransigent on issues vital to us. But it would surely have been very surprising if, in advance of negotiations, he had gone on record in terms which would have meant his surrendering essential points in advance. Indeed this would be contrary to the general practice of all negotiations, international, industrial or any other. Knowing Smith as I do, I think it would also be contrary to his temperament.

I believe however that we should put ourselves into an impossible position in national politics—and possibly internationally—if his refusal to give away all his negotiating points in advance were used by us to justify a refusal of negotiations. On the other hand we can not enter into negotiations under any misunderstanding or confusion about the basis on which those negotiations would proceed.

It is to administer this proposition very clearly to the Governor and to Smith that is, as I conceive it, the purpose of Mr. Bottomley's visits to Rhodesia.³

Let me clarify this a little further. I do not consider that we can insist in advance on a clear assurance that Smith will give us the blocking quarter and the other British requirements. On the other hand, I think it would be wrong to enter into negotiations unless it had first been made clear to Smith and he had acknowledged this fact, that whatever the give and take of negotiations, we should not agree to a settlement which did not include provision for the three requirements I have listed above, with adequate guarantees for their fulfilment.

If our offer were put to Smith on this basis, the onus of refusing negotiations would then be on him. Our Conservative opponents could hardly condemn us for making the blocking quarter and the Privy Council non-negotiable, since this would, *eo ipso*, appear to be defaulting on the Six Principles, which not only they but even Smith have in the past accepted. It is true—and the Conservatives have made a great deal of this—that the concept of the broad-based government is not comprised within the Six Principles. From our point of view—though the Conservatives will give us no help here—this is essential to provide the 'substantial change of circumstances' and we can, of course, count on the full support of our own people for having insisted on this. And we can argue even more strongly after the events of the past week, even of the past 48 hours, that any agreement reached must be proof against a political *volte-face* by Smith, if he decided in the end to line up with the Rhodesian Front extremists, and provide some degree of assurance against any political take-over from the Right. Furthermore, international acceptance of an agreement, as something likely to be honoured and guaranteed, equally requires the formation of a broadly-based Government. I have no doubt that even on the basis of the present electorate Smith could get adequate support tomorrow for a binding agreement, but only if he called to his aid the business classes, many farmers, the Welensky and Whitehead supporters and the liberals, not to mention politically articulate sections of African and coloured opinion. This is I think a sufficient answer to those who inevitably will claim that it is unreasonable to add to our requirement of the Six Principles the demand for a broad-based government.

I therefore consider that the purpose of Mr. Bottomley's first visit should be not only to reassure and gain the support of the Governor but also to make it clear to Smith that we are prepared for constructive talks within the terms we have laid

³ For the Bottomley visits, see PREM 13/2325.

down. It seems to me essential and urgent that Smith should take this on board before he is pushed, as he may be, into Right Wing moves as a result of his Party's pressure. It would then be for Mr. Bottomley to come back and report on Smith's first reactions. If Smith says that in no circumstances will he enter into an agreement which meets our three requirements, then that is that. Our task in these circumstances will then only be to get this made clear in writing so that the responsibility for not entering into negotiations is fixed clearly on Smith.

We shall have to meet urgently to consider Mr. Bottomley's report on his first visit. If it is not a flat rejection we shall have to prepare equally careful instructions for his second visit. Given an adequate response, his task will be to agree the necessary arrangements for negotiations, and, in particular, the guarantees, oral or written, that we shall require about Smith's own position, and indeed about the Governor, as on the last occasion. For talks to take place I think we shall need a recorded acknowledgement by Smith that he has taken on board our statement that no agreement will be possible which fails to give effect to our three non-negotiable points. This is the least we must ask for, and in present circumstances, I believe, the most we are likely to get—though, if we can get something better, Mr. Bottomley will of course seek to achieve it. The result of approaching him on this basis will be either that Smith comes to a meeting having acknowledged the basis on which we shall be negotiating, or he will have refused to come on that basis, in which case no valid criticism can be laid at our door of the fact that negotiations have not taken place.

I am sending copies of this minute to the Commonwealth Secretary and to Sir Burke Trend.⁴

⁴ Commenting on Wilson's minute to Stewart, Thomson argued Britain would have to consider beforehand 'the international price in political and economic terms which we might have to be ready to pay for the valuable prize of a Rhodesian settlement'. For Thomson an acceptable settlement internationally was one in which Zambia—'the likely bell-weather among Afro-Asian countries'—felt able to acquiesce privately, whatever Kaunda's public posture. Failure to carry Zambia could have serious consequences, not least at the UN where the UK might find itself having to veto Security Council resolutions. There was also the danger the Commonwealth might break up. Economically, Kaunda might respond to outside pressures and act against his own interests by halting the supply of copper from Zambia to the UK. Thomson concluded that while Britain was right to seek a settlement, 'an agreement which did not command the necessary minimum degree of international acquiescence far from removing the "Rhodesia millstone" from our necks would make it heavier both in economic and political terms than the present "long haul"'. He suggested a restricted group of senior advisers from the Cabinet Office, the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Office should be instructed to weigh the international consequences of (a) obtaining and (b) seeking but failing to secure a settlement along the lines now envisaged (PREM 13/2325, minute, 17 Sept 1968).

Wilson replied on 20 Sept. To the prime minister every one of Thomson's arguments would be just as valid 'next year or the year after as they are today'. In this sense they were arguments about why there could never be a settlement and looking to the future, it was at least equally arguable that the longer the delay, the more 'things will get worse rather than better'. In Wilson's judgement, while not underestimating the problems in achieving any settlement at all, 'it will be easier to get one now on honourable terms than it would have been at any time in the past year or more, and . . . it might be easier to get one now than it may be in a years' time or later'. On specific points in Thomson's analysis, Wilson argued Britain could not accept a Commonwealth veto on the right of the UK to come to a settlement and he did not see why Zambia should be a litmus test. On the economic arguments he responded: 'Just as Arab states can't eat their oil, Zambia can't eat her copper and whether that copper came to us direct or went elsewhere on the world market the supply and indeed price position would be little affected.' And on the UN issue, the prime minister argued that in embarking on comprehensive mandatory sanctions, Britain had never circumscribed its right, at any time considered appropriate, to negotiate an honourable settlement. Wilson was also against further study because other departments (eg the Treasury) would have

to be involved. This he was 'loth' to propose because it had been agreed 'to keep the present probings very tightly to the minimum number of persons who "need to know"' (*ibid*, minute 20 Sept 1968).

235 PREM 13/2326

30 Sept 1968

[Balance of payments]: minute by Mr Jenkins to Mr Wilson on the balance of payments cost to the UK of the Rhodesian emergency

You asked for an estimate of the balance of payments cost to the U.K. of the Rhodesia emergency.

I am enclosing a note with accompanying table,¹ which in substance reflects an interdepartmental assessment made some months ago. In the time available it has not been possible to rework the figures in detail but there is no ground for assuming that such reworking would produce major changes in the picture. Any estimates are necessarily very tentative but you will see that the note suggests that the annual balance of payments cost is probably at the lower end of the range of £30–£60 million—perhaps £40 million for 1969.

There are many uncertainties underlying the estimates; but perhaps the main one (paragraph 3 of the note) is the extent to which resources which would otherwise have been used for exports to Rhodesia have been diverted to exports to third countries or put to domestic use in substitution for imports. Not least because of the uncertainties the figures are not suitable for public use.

I should perhaps emphasise (paragraph 4 of the note) that the figures do *not* purport to indicate the extent to which the balance of payments would benefit if a settlement were reached. In the shorter term at least it could well be that the benefit would be considerably less at an annual rate than the losses which have been incurred as a consequence of the Rhodesian emergency. A settlement, however, would no doubt substantially reduce the pressure on us in the U.N. and elsewhere for action damaging to our substantial trade with South Africa.

¹ Table and note not printed.

236 PREM 13/2326, no 10

1 Oct 1968

[Terms for a settlement]: inward telegram no 1053 from P A Carter¹ to Mr Thomson transmitting the text of an aide mémoire from Rhodesian ministers

Following is text referred to in my immediately preceding telegram.

Aide Mémoire.

Rhodesian Ministers have received and carefully considered the communication from British Ministers in the aide mémoire dated 28 September proposing a meeting to establish whether an agreement can be reached on an honourable settlement between their respective Governments. Rhodesian Ministers welcome this approach pointing out that it is and always has been their declared policy to participate in

¹ See 233, note 1.

constructive talks on ways and means of overcoming the present deadlock, and of reaching a settlement which they can commend to the Rhodesian electorate and Parliament.

The Rhodesian Government note the British Government's position on the three points explained by Mr. Bottomley last month to the Rhodesian Prime Minister, and the intention of the British Government not to abandon their stand on these points, namely: a blocking quarter composed of elected Africans, appeals to the Privy Council on the lines of the Tiger Working Document, and the formation of a broad-based Government to remain in office until a new Constitution comes into force. For their part the Rhodesian Government desire to make it clear once again to the British Government, before they embark on a meeting, their position on these points and hope that the British Government will understand that equally they are not prepared to abandon their stand on these points, namely: a blocking quarter in which the composition of the Senate consists in an equal number of Chiefs and elected Africans, the unacceptability of appeals to the Privy Council on the lines of the Tiger Working Document, and the unacceptability of any form of procedure for a return to legality in the shape of a broad-based Government.

The Rhodesian Prime Minister confirms that he will take part in a meeting with British Prime Minister in the full knowledge of the British Government's position and provided the British Prime Minister does so in the full knowledge of the Rhodesian position.

On the question of a venue for the meeting, the Rhodesian Government consider that if it is not found possible to hold the meeting either in Salisbury or in Britain, (and they put this suggestion forward for serious consideration) a place should be chosen which can be regarded as neutral for both parties. They therefore suggest, in order of preference: Malawi, Switzerland, Malta.

The Rhodesian Government regret that prior commitments render it difficult to meet on 9 October. Furthermore, the Rhodesian Parliament is due to reconvene on 17 October to renew the state of emergency. They therefore suggest that for their part 21 October would be most convenient date to meet.

There is no objection to British Government's wish that Sir Humphrey Gibbs should be present. The Rhodesian Government would gladly exchange such safe conduct guarantees as may be required if they and Sir Humphrey Gibbs are required to travel outside Rhodesia.

Rhodesian Prime Minister will be accompanied by two of his Ministerial colleagues and a party consisting of 12 officials and supporting staff.

It would be the wish of Rhodesian Government that their party should travel to the conference under their own arrangements.

The Rhodesian Government agree that ample time should be allowed for negotiations, and if need be, for consultation.

237 PREM 13/2326, no 14

2 Oct 1968

[Selection of chiefs for membership of legislatures]: letter from J R Williams to A M Palliser. *Enclosure*

You wrote to me on 24 September saying that the Prime Minister wanted an urgent study to be made of the practice in African countries, other than Rhodesia,

(both ex-British and ex-French Colonies) with regard to the part played in the Constitution or the Legislative Assemblies by Chiefs who have been elected in some way.

I attach a note on this subject which has been prepared by ourselves and the Foreign Office in consultation. It gives a broad picture which may meet the Prime Minister's immediate requirements, but we could not produce a precise and detailed account without very much more thorough research than we have felt desirable, given the urgency and the need for secrecy about this exercise. If it was ever desired to place heavy reliance on the information in the paper it would really be desirable for us to mount a research exercise in greater depth in order to corroborate and supplement it.

The calibre and status of chiefs vary from country to country in Africa. In particular in some countries their jurisdiction and powers are those conferred on them by traditional native law and custom, while in other cases these are closely regulated by—and sometimes, indeed, derived solely from—specific statutory provision. In Rhodesia, appointment or recognition by Government is a precondition of a chief exercising legal jurisdiction and powers. Such appointment or recognition is normally given to the person who would be entitled to be regarded as chief under tribal custom or to some member of the chiefly family, but this is by no means invariably the case. But in all cases their appointment, tenure of office and payment is in the hands of Government, and their powers, though partly derived from traditional law and custom, are heavily circumscribed. The quality of chiefs in Rhodesia is generally pretty low although there are probably some, more often Matabele than Mashona, who have gained their peoples' respect by force of personality.

Enclosure to 237

(a) *African Commonwealth countries*

1. No African Commonwealth country specifically disqualifies Chiefs as such for election as ordinary elected members of the legislature. But where certain Chiefs are *ex officio* members of the legislature (e.g. in Lesotho, where the Principal Chiefs are *ex officio* Senators though they may nominate substitutes to represent them) these particular Chiefs are naturally disqualified from standing for election as ordinary members. Similarly, in those countries where seats in the legislature are specifically reserved for members selected from among Chiefs of a certain class, it is sometimes provided (e.g. in Sierra Leone) that all Chiefs of that particular class are disqualified from standing as candidates for ordinary election.

2. It is known that Chiefs do in fact at present hold seats as ordinary elected members in the legislatures of Malawi, Lesotho and Swaziland. In the past there have also been Chiefs who have been ordinary elected members of the legislatures of Tanganyika and Nigeria (both in the Federal Legislature and in the Regions). There may have been, or may still be, similar examples in the legislatures of other countries but it is not possible to tell with certainty from the material immediately available to us. (In some of these cases, the person concerned may not have any official functions as a Chief though, being an hereditary Chief or of Chiefly family, he still uses the honorific title of Chief.)

3. Leaving aside the case of those Chiefs who get themselves elected as ordinary members and leaving aside also the Chiefs who are *ex officio* members, there is also provision in the Constitutions of some countries for some seats to be reserved for Chiefs who are selected in some way either from among the whole body of Chiefs or from among Chiefs of a certain class. Sometimes these reserved seats form part of a separate House of Chiefs, as in Zambia (where the House of Chiefs is really ancillary to the Legislature rather than part of it) and in the Regions in Nigeria before 1966. Sometimes they form part of the lower House or the sole House in a unicameral legislature, as in Sierra Leone and the Gambia.

4. The method of selection varies but the following are examples:—

(a) *Zambia*

Apart from the Barotseland Chiefs, the members of the House of Chiefs are chosen by the Chiefs' Provincial Council in each Province from among the members of that Council.

(b) *Nigerian Regions (before 1966)*

In some cases the Chiefs were nominated by the Government. But at least at one stage in the Western Region they were elected by electoral colleges consisting, in effect, of local government authorities which were in turn composed partly of Chiefs and partly of directly elected members.

(c) *The Gambia*

The four Chiefs' Representative Members are elected by the Head Chiefs from among their own number by a process of secret ballot after the list of candidates has been vetted (e.g. by reference to literacy and similar qualifications) by a Government commission.

(d) *Sierra Leone*

The Paramount Chiefs who are elected to the Assembly, one for each District, are chosen by what is in effect an electoral college within the District consisting of the members of the District Councils, at least some of whom are themselves popularly elected.

5. There is no known example of seats being reserved for Chiefs who are directly elected on a popular franchise.

(b) *Francophone Africa*

6. With the exception of the Western Region of the Cameroon (see below) there is no provision in the Constitution of any francophone African State for Chiefs as such to play a role in the legislature.

7. Because of the prominent economic and social position which Chiefs and their sons have enjoyed, members of chiefly families have frequently been elected to the legislatures where they have functioned on an equal footing with other democratically-elected deputies.

8. The exception referred to above is Cameroon where, in fact, the English-speaking area (the former Trust Territory administered by the United Kingdom) contains a House of Chiefs which is understood still to retain some legislative powers in conjunction with the elected Legislative Assembly of 37 Members.

238 PREM 13/2326, no 20

2 Oct 1968

'Terms for a settlement': letter from A N Halls¹ to D J D Maitland² on a meeting of ministers to decide whether to proceed to a summit meeting with Mr Smith

[The Labour Party was meeting at Blackpool for its annual conference when this letter was sent. Talks with Smith were held on board HMS *Fearless*, again off Gibraltar, from 9 to 13 Oct 1968. The atmosphere was more relaxed than it had been on *Tiger*, one reason being that the Rhodesians had their own ship, HMS *Kent*, to which they could retire. Going into the talks Richard Crossman, lord president of the Council who became secretary of state for social services on 1 Nov, noted in his diary (8 Oct) that Wilson was 'thrilled, longing to be off, loving having the press all around him, loving being the centre of world attention, feeling that at last he must win when he faces Smith eyeball to eyeball' (Richard Crossman, *The diaries of a Cabinet minister Vol Three Secretary of state for social services 1968-70*, London, 1977, pp 216-217). Smith proved to be a formidable adversary during the talks, Wilson conceding he was 'the quickest-witted debater he had ever been up against' (*ibid*, 15 Oct 1968, p 222). The *Fearless* proposals were essentially those which had been offered on *Tiger*, although this time underwritten by a UK pledge to finance a programme of African education, and with a significant concession on the issue of a broad-based government—Africans were to be included but the Rhodesian Front would still be the majority and the government would still be in power when the proposals as a whole were submitted to the test of acceptability. It had been agreed that the Rhodesian delegation should return to Salisbury to consider their verdict (in fact no time limit was set for leaving the proposals on offer). Statements coming out of the Rhodesian capital were not encouraging and Thomson visited Salisbury from 2 to 16 Nov for further talks. While there he had stormy encounters with the detained leaders of ZANU and ZAPU (PREM 13/2330). But Wilson was still said by some to be optimistic. Tony Benn, minister of technology, had noted in his diary just before Thomson's departure: 'Harold is absolutely determined to settle with Ian Smith and nothing one can say can stop him' (*Diary*, 31 October 1968, p 115). This time on the basis that the right of appeal to the Privy Council was an infringement of sovereignty and therefore unacceptable, Smith's government rejected the *Fearless* proposals. The scheme stirred considerable controversy within the Labour Party when it was published and debated in Parliament. Barbara Castle, the minister of employment and productivity, had threatened resignation and when the House of Commons debated the proposals on 22 October, 49 Labour MPs voted against the government and 100 abstained. For the record of the *Fearless* talks, see PREM 13/2327 and *Rhodesia: Report of the Discussions held on Board HMS Fearless, October 1968*, Cmnd 3793.]

The Prime Minister called a meeting of Ministers at the Imperial Hotel, Blackpool at 2.45 p.m. today to discuss Salisbury telegrams Nos. 1053 and 1059 which had been received overnight in Blackpool. The Foreign Secretary, the Lord Chancellor, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Lord Privy Seal, the President of the Board of Trade, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, and the Paymaster General were present.³

The Prime Minister invited the Commonwealth Secretary to give an assessment of the response made by Mr. Smith. The Commonwealth Secretary said that Mr. Smith's response was a cleverly worded reply with well calculated ambiguities.⁴ While it was not possible to take an optimistic view of the substance of the reply he nevertheless felt that it was drafted in such terms that if it were eventually published and the Government had not responded by trying to bring about talks at the summit, we should be at a considerable disadvantage. As regards the ambiguities, Mr. Smith's

¹ See 232.² Principal private secretary to Stewart.³ Lord Gardiner, lord chancellor; Mr F Peart, lord privy seal; Mr A Crosland, president of the Board of Trade; Lord Shackleton, paymaster general.⁴ See 236.

comment on the blocking quarter could be interpreted in a way which was more consistent with our position than appeared on the surface. Mr. Smith's comments about the broad-based Government were also ambiguous and it might be, for example, that they reflected his concern about the method of return to legality. The Commonwealth Secretary's conclusion was, therefore, that the Government should proceed to try and bring about summit talks: the question was how could we best do so, bearing in mind that if the meeting did not take place the documents would almost certainly be published.

The meeting then discussed the points arising on the blocking quarter and the broad-based Government, and the line of the Government's reaction to Mr. Smith's response. All the Ministers present agreed that we should seek to bring about the talks with Mr. Smith.

There was then a discussion on (a) the timing and (b) the venue of any meeting with Mr. Smith. The Prime Minister summarising the discussion, said that it was agreed that:—

(a) The timing proposed to Mr. Smith could not be changed because after Parliament had reconvened on October 14 it would not be possible to allow sufficient time for the talks and any consultation with Salisbury which Mr. Smith might wish to have: the dates proposed by Mr. Smith were quite impossible and the most which could be offered to him was that the talks might start a day later on October 10 if Mr. Smith had particular difficulties about beginning on October 9. If necessary, the Prime Minister would be prepared for the talks to continue until October 14 or 15.

(b) A 'neutral' venue was out of the question: the best course was still to try and have the talks in H.M. ships moored in Gibraltar harbour: after careful consideration of Malta, and on the advice of the Commonwealth Secretary, Malta would not be suitable: and the only alternative to Gibraltar was the Sovereign Base area in Cyprus; if we had to fall back on the Sovereign Base area President Makarios⁵ should not be informed until the morning of departure.

The Prime Minister invited the Commonwealth Secretary to draft a telegram to Salisbury recording the agreed decisions which could then be teleprinted to London for consideration by officials; it would be shown individually to the Ministers present at the meeting for their comments before it was finally approved.

In the course of the afternoon and evening two telegrams were prepared, one in the form of an aide memoire to Mr. Smith and the other giving supplementary instructions to Mr. Carter to be conveyed orally to Mr. Smith. A number of comments were made by the Ministers and Commonwealth Office officials and were taken into account in the telegrams which were approved by the Prime Minister at 11.45 p.m.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Lord Chancellor, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Lord Privy Seal, the President of the Board of Trade, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, and the Paymaster General, and a copy also goes to Burke Trend.

⁵ President of Cyprus, 1959–1977.

239 PREM 13/2329

31 Oct 1968

[Nyerere]: letter from President Nyerere to Mr Wilson on the consequences for Britain and Africa if independence is granted to Rhodesia on the basis of minority rule

Dear Mr. Wilson,

I have received your Message of October 24th, and on Tuesday had a discussion with your High Commissioner in Dar es Salaam. I have no doubt but that Mr. Philips¹ will report to you in full, but this is such an important subject to us, and to Africa, that I must also write to you directly.

I did, and still do, perfectly understand the political necessity for you to agree to talks with Ian Smith whenever he appears to be willing to undertake such an exercise. For this reason I have never criticised the idea of talks. The substance of your discussions, however, is an entirely different thing.

In 1965, at the Commonwealth Conference, I made it absolutely clear that Tanzania could accept nothing short of independence on the basis of majority rule as a settlement of the Rhodesian issue. I have maintained this position ever since. In 1966 you told the Commonwealth Heads of Government that you wanted one more attempt to settle with Smith on a basis less difficult for him to accept; you said that if this attempt failed then the British Government would accept the commitment to majority rule before independence. The Tiger talks did fail: you did announce your acceptance of this principle. The Fearless talks were on an entirely different basis.

I am sure that it is not necessary for me now to explain why we regard the principle of majority rule before independence to be so crucial. I would only remind you that it was Britain which, in 1910, granted independence to South Africa on the basis of minority rule. Safeguards were written into that constitution. What has happened to them now? And what has Britain ever done to enforce those safeguards? She has done nothing, and can do nothing. For independence precludes the intervention of outside powers. The legal arguments Britain now uses at the United Nations to prevent action following her condemnation of South African apartheid apply to every independent state. They would apply to Rhodesia if that country is granted independence on the basis of minority rule.

Yet you maintain that something less than majority rule is both an honourable and a possible basis for a settlement of the Rhodesian issue. What is 'honourable' is of course, a matter of opinion; I confess, however, that I find it difficult to understand how a Labour Government can even contemplate the creation of another South Africa, and believe that this can be done with honour. For this is what minority rule means; safeguards are meaningless when power is transferred. After its experience in South Africa and elsewhere I cannot believe that Britain thinks otherwise. When a minority has power it can, and it will, use it for the purposes and interests of that minority.

Quite apart from the dishonour involved for Britain, however, there is the fact that anything less than majority rule is not a possible basis for a settlement, if by this word you mean something which will bring peace and progress to Rhodesia. For peace in that country, and in Southern Africa as a whole, is not something which is

¹ H Philips, high commissioner, Tanzania.

in the sole control of Britain or of the minority regimes. The African people have their own influence on it.

For more than a year now the Smith Regime has been strained by the necessity to deal with the activities of freedom fighters. These freedom fighters are Rhodesians: their struggle receives support from independent African states—including that of Tanzania. And they are not fighting in order that the question of illegality may be overcome: they are fighting in order that they may be assured that power over the lives of the African peoples does not remain in the hands of the white minority—with or without ‘safeguards’ on paper. They believe that only the principle of majority rule before independence gives them hope of that. But if independence does come first, the freedom fighters will not give up their struggle for majority rule. Nor could Tanzania ask them to do so.

It is difficult for me to express the seriousness of this situation as far as we are concerned. Up to now Britain and Tanzania have, in the last resort, been on the same side on the Rhodesian issue. There have been great disagreements between us about how the Smith Regime could be overcome, but we were always united in the belief that this had to happen and that the African Rhodesians had to attain their human rights. If, however, Britain agrees to Rhodesian independence on the basis of minority rule, the situation will be fundamentally changed. Our two countries will be on different sides.

If Britain recognises a legal independent minority government in Rhodesia, it will be committed to support that Government and that regime. Tanzania, on the other hand, remains with the commitment to majority rule. We shall be in the same position as we are now, committed to the African freedom struggle. Britain’s agreement with Smith will change her relations with Rhodesia: it will not affect Tanzania’s relations with that minority regime. What will inevitably be affected instead is Britain’s relations with Tanzania.

In your Message you said, ‘The use of force could . . . lead to disastrous consequences for southern Africa as a whole’. My reply must be that a settlement on the basis of minority rule does not prevent the use of force in Rhodesia. It simply changes the context in which that force will operate. Instead of guerrilla fighting acting as a supplementary factor in the defeat of the minority regime, it will become the only factor: it will take longer, and become more bitter in consequence. Instead of Britain being somewhat embarrassed by the kind of support her cause is receiving, Britain will be an embarrassed participant in the fight against the forces struggling for majority rule. Tanzania, and Africa as a whole, will still be supporting the struggle for majority rule. The relationship of Britain and Tanzania will therefore have changed. We shall no longer be quarrelling allies, but will have become peoples fighting on opposite sides in a war for national freedom.

This prospect fills me with despair. The consequences for my country, and for Africa, and ultimately for the world, will be more serious than I can contemplate with equanimity. But for Tanzania to acquiesce in Rhodesian white minority rule is impossible. In asking that you are asking us to acquiesce in the serfdom of our brothers, and even of ourselves. However diluted the racism of Rhodesia may appear to be at one moment when compared with that of South Africa, minority rule there without any superior authority means that the doctrines of apartheid have advanced, and that their advance has been recognised, and accepted, by Britain. For if an agreement on the basis of minority rule is accepted, the power to implement any or all of the policies of apartheid will rest with Mr. Smith and the whites of Rhodesia—any agreement with

Britain to the contrary notwithstanding. For independence means what it says: that no external power can interfere with the decisions of a recognised Government.

There is nothing more that I can say. I have written frankly as you asked, and as is our custom. I can only conclude by repeating that this issue marks a choice by Britain. In the full and sympathetic knowledge of the British economic and other difficulties, I can only pray that she does not range herself with South Africa and Rhodesia against Africa as a whole.²

Yours sincerely,
Julius K. Nyerere

² At the end of the year MacDonald sent Thomson a note about reactions to the 'Fearless' proposals: 'I must write in all candour—and with great sorrow—that this British Government's word is no longer trusted either in Africa or some other parts of the world. It has been very sad for me to discover this in my talks with many leading statesmen and other representative people during my visits to South-East Asia, North America and the Mediterranean area, as well as through much of Africa. Important Indian, Malaysian, Singaporean, Canadian and other personalities have told me that Britain's international prestige and influence have inevitably declined because of our reduced military might, economic strength and therefore diplomatic power, but that we could nevertheless still exert especially high influence in many world affairs—if the British Government's word were still regarded, as it invariably was until recently, as properly reliable. I am afraid that if we now vow to break our solemn pledge on NIBMR to the 1966 Commonwealth Conference, the distrust of our Government in the Commonwealth and outside it will reach a point of no return. And even the small minority of our Commonwealth partners who would support us on a "Fearless" settlement might do so with a cynical conviction of our dishonesty. I would be failing in my duty as an adviser to the Government if I did not state this fact clearly and candidly. Distrust of H.M.G. is now producing an attitude of widespread, shocked criticism against us British. I know from many recent conversations which I have had with Ambassadors, Ministers and other similarly significant foreign representatives about our most recent talks with Smith in Gibraltar and Salisbury that many Governments outside as well as inside Africa regard the "Fearless" proposals as a "sell-out". For example, when an eminent diplomatic representative of a friendly white power read the announcement from London that those proposals would be "left on the table" he remarked to me, 'I see that your Government's policy is "no sell-out"—unless we can find a purchaser.' (FCO 73/128, MacDonald to Thomson, 11 Dec 1968). Thomson noted (23 Dec) at the top of MacDonald's covering letter: 'This should *not* be circulated.'

In Jan 1969 Thomson asked Healey to consider what action the UK might take (a) to deter Rhodesian attacks against guerrilla bases in Zambia, and (b) to rescue the situation if deterrence failed. The COS produced an interim report on 9 Jan to the effect that direct military action by Rhodesia was unlikely (economic measures were thought more probable), but to cover contingency (a) two brigades would be needed. On contingency (b) the COS commented: 'The forces needed for military intervention would be totally out of proportion to the scale of possible Rhodesian aggression'. Healey added (9 Jan) in a covering minute: 'The circumstances in which our forces might be deployed—and more still used—would be critical to the morale of our forces. To take one example, if British action were to follow on Rhodesian retaliation against a barbarous attack on Rhodesian families, the morale question would raise far more formidable difficulties than if it followed an unprovoked Rhodesian attack against Zambia' (FCO 73/1290).

240 FCO 35/238, no 115

9 May 1969

'The effects of sanctions on the Rhodesian economy since IDI and the outlook for 1969': note (R(S)(69)3) by MoD for Official Cabinet Committee on Economic Sanctions

Balance of payments

1. Sanctions reduced Rhodesia's exports from £R164 m. to £R104 m. in the first year after IDI, and have since kept them down to £R101 m. in 1967 and £R97.4 in 1968.

2. The largest proportion of Rhodesia's annual exports—about £R30 m.—has gone to South Africa, Portugal and Switzerland. About £R7 m. has gone to other countries outside Africa, £R17 m. to Zambia, Malawi and other neighbouring countries, £R6 m. in the form of gold to Switzerland and the remainder (perhaps £R37 m.) in the form of goods which escape the control systems of countries enforcing the embargo and thus remain unrecorded. The commodity most seriously hit has been tobacco, exports of which have fallen from £R49 m. in 1965 to perhaps £R15 m. in 1968.

3. In order to avoid unacceptable strain on Rhodesia's very low foreign exchange reserves, imports were cut back by the regime from £R120 m. in 1965 to £R85 m. in the first year after IDI and were held at £R94 m. in 1967. However, in 1968 they were allowed to rise to £R104 m., giving Rhodesia a very large deficit on current account of £R27 m. taking a net Invisibles deficit of £R19 m. into account compared with a deficit of £R9 m. in 1967 and a surplus of £R15 m. in 1965. The import restrictions imposed by the regime last August and again in December underline the continued pressure on Rhodesia's external payments position. Nevertheless, Rhodesia was able to virtually cover this deficit on current account because of a net capital inflow of £R25 m. and this was probably the most significant development in Rhodesia's balance of payments position in 1968. £R21 m. of this was into the corporate sector compared with £R9.8 m. in 1967 and a net outflow of £R1 m. in 1966. There is no indication of how permanent such a large inflow will be, but it is certainly of the magnitude Rhodesia requires if she is to put her balance of payments on a surer footing.

National income

4. Despite the 30% fall in trade turnover since 1965, the latest figures published by the regime show a rise of about 11% in Gross Domestic Product from £R352 m. in 1965 to £R390 m. in 1968. Although in part a reflection of a successful programme of import substitution and agricultural diversification, the increased prosperity is more apparent than real: about two-thirds of this increase was accounted for by a 7% increase in prices and when population growth is taken into account, real income per head had fallen by some 5% by the end of 1967 and remained static at that level during 1968. Furthermore, in both 1966 and 1967 between 5 and 10% of total income was derived directly, and an additional unknown proportion derived indirectly, from the production of export goods which had to be stockpiled. Net increases in stocks amounted in fact to £R46 m. between the end of 1965 and the beginning of 1968. What figures suggested, therefore, is that Rhodesia has been successful in preventing any fall in general income (a small drop in 1966 was followed by a recovery in 1967), but has nevertheless only been able to stand still in economic terms since IDI.

Production

5. The severity of the impact of sanctions has of course varied from sector to sector. Agriculture has been worst hit. Although total farm output rose 7% (£R6 m.) between 1965 and 1967, nearly 10% of the 1967 total must have consisted of stockpiled tobacco, and the maize crop, which, with an increase of well over 50% (perhaps £R6 m.) over the two years, has been the main factor in the overall rise, has had to be heavily subsidised by the regime. The tobacco crop for 1968 was further reduced to only 132 m. lbs. (250 m. in 1966 and 186 m. in 1967), and the drought

early in the year halved the maize harvest, so that total farm output fell by 12% in 1968 from £R92.5 m. to £R81.5 m. Because of the good harvest in 1969 the total production should increase greatly. The tobacco target for 1970 is to be maintained at the 1969 level at the same average price, the first time this has happened since IDI. Even so, the figures do not reveal the extent to which the drop in tobacco production has reduced the profitability of agriculture and caused a marked rise in the level of farmers debts.

6. Mining output fell by about 2% in volume between 1965 and 1967 but because of the very much higher copper prices in world markets, the value of output rose by about 4% (compared with a 35% increase in the two years prior to IDI). This trend continued in 1968 when mineral production was valued at £R33.7 m. compared with £R33.4 m. in 1967. It is likely that the value of mineral production will rise again in 1969 following increased activity in the industry during 1968 and the prospect of increased sales abroad (especially of nickel).

7. Successful import substitution has enabled manufacturing output to recover the ground lost in 1966 when its main export markets were cut off, and in 1968 output was at a record level, 13% higher than in 1967.

8. The other sectors of the economy—distribution, transport, services etc.—have in general followed the trends in the primary producing sectors. The contribution of transport to the national output fell steadily between 1965 and 1967 but was a little above the IDI level in 1968. The contribution of building and construction had increased sharply however, and in 1968 the total construction output increased in value by over 30% from £R35.7 m. to £R46.8 m. reflecting the availability of funds for building since IDI.

Employment and migration

9. Official figures show that European employment since IDI has fallen in agriculture by about 15% (700) and commerce 2% (500), but risen in mining 9% (250), manufacturing, 9% (1,500), and, significantly, in government administration 15% (1,500). The figures do not show that, in addition, about 1,000 tobacco farmers—one third of the total number—have had to give up farming or turn to other crops; nor do they show that in some cases government direction has prevented firms from dismissing redundant labour. Net European immigration in 1968 was 7,000, compared with 4,500 in 1965. However, in the first two months of 1969 the net inflow was little more than half that for the same period of 1968. This continued a downward trend which began in mid 1968 and it is unlikely that last year's figures will again be repeated in 1969, let alone the 10,000 per annum which the regime has set as their official target for net European immigration.

10. It is African employment that has borne the brunt of sanctions. The major change has been a decrease of over 34,000 in the number employed in agriculture, which has been largely offset by a rise of 30,000 in employment elsewhere. But while the number of jobs has remained the same since IDI, the African population as a whole has increased by 10%. The regime has thus failed to create enough jobs for the 30,000 or so African school leavers annually—one of the country's persistent long term problems, although it has been partially alleviated by a steady reduction in the migrant labour force: net emigration of non-indigenous African males amounts to over 30,000 since IDI. During the same period European employment increased 5.7% for a population increase of 7%.

Finance

11. The impact of sanctions on official finance has shown itself in a heavy rise in public expenditure. In 1967/68 it was 60% above the pre IDI level, and the public debt is now 30% higher. Most of the increase is a direct result of the need to meet the cost of sanctions, and in particular to finance the tobacco stockpile. The actual raising of large amounts of money for stockpiling without causing inflation—prices have risen only by about 7% since 1965—has been possible because of the money locked inside Rhodesia by exchange control, restraint in private consumption and investment and a variety of monetary measures taken by the regime. In 1968 there was evidence that this pattern may have been changing as advances by the commercial banks to the private sector increased as demand deposits levelled off, as well as a fall in savings deposits. Whether this trend will lead to an inflationary situation in 1969 is not clear and will depend on the progress of industrial diversification, the level of exports and government expenditure, and the continuing ability of the regime to raise new money etc.

Overall impression

12. Although sanctions have kept exports down to only 60% of the 1965 level, economic activity as a whole has recovered the ground lost in 1966 under the immediate impact of sanctions and is now slightly above the 1965 level in real terms. This relatively good performance has been due partly to successful import substitution by secondary industry, agricultural diversification and a continued high level of mining output. It has also been assisted by excellent harvests (except for 1968). However, it could only be achieved by large increases in stocks (worth at least £R40 m.) which have still to be disposed of.

Outlook for 1969

13. Despite the introduction of comprehensive mandatory sanctions in May 1968, Rhodesian exports declined by only a little more than 3% over the previous year and it was a 12% increase in imports which was responsible for the very large deficit on current account. This rise was largely to satisfy increased demands for goods and investment in plant and equipment, imports of which increased by 20% in 1968. The regime clearly hopes that the increased productive capacity resulting from the greater inflow of capital in 1968 will serve to increase exports and import substitution projects. On the whole, export prospects are considerably better for 1969 than for 1968. Though the first half of 1969 is likely to prove a period of strain on Rhodesia's external payments position, with imports held down to a minimum, after mid-1969 exports of agricultural products from this year's good harvest should recover from their 1967 level and that together with increased sales of mineral products (especially nickel), should ease the position. But much will also depend on Rhodesia being able to evade sanctions on at least the current scale.

14. There are some indications that an inflationary situation might develop in Rhodesia in 1969. These are the levelling off of demand deposits in the commercial banks, increasing advances to the private sector and increasing hire purchase debts. However, such tendencies would be mitigated by an improved export performance in 1969.

15. To some extent Rhodesia's better economic prospects for 1969 have already shown themselves in the better than expected farm prices announced in mid-April.

The tobacco crop target for next season remains unchanged at 132 m. lbs. with the same average price, the first time since sanctions were imposed that Government financial support has not been reduced. And while the price for maize will be slightly lower, much higher yields this year means that farmers should be better off in 1969. Reduced fertilizer costs have also been announced to coincide with the coming onto stream of the Sable chemicals fertilizer plant.

Longer term outlook

16. The greatly increased flow of capital into Rhodesia in 1968 should enable her to increase the level of exports and import substitution projects. Clearly much depends on the level at which capital inflow continues and no firm prediction is possible.

But if Rhodesia could maintain appropriate inflows during the next few years, it may mean that the economy could at least grow and real income increase, rather than remaining stagnant as at present. It might also mean that Rhodesia could become less dependent on external trade altogether as her import substitution industries grow, relying more and more on South Africa for her vital imports.

241 FCO 35/239, no 161

3 Nov 1969

[Business interests]: record by J R A Bottomley of a meeting with prominent businessmen with interests in Rhodesia¹

*Mr. Mansfield*²

As you know, Sir J. Johnston and I attended a lunch today given by Mr. Trevor Peppercorn (Chairman of the CBI Rhodesia Committee) for Sir J. Johnston and some prominent businessmen involved with Rhodesian affairs. I attach a copy of the guest list.

2. During lunch conversation was general—at my end of the table it turned to quite a large extent on Zambian affairs (see paragraph 9 below). When the coffee was served, Mr. Peppercorn called the table to order and explained that the object of the lunch was to see whether those present had any useful information for us about the trend of events in Rhodesia. Sir J. Johnston explained that we were not asking people to confess their sins over evasions of sanctions; and that on the other hand if any did so, we could not regard the meeting as being under the seal of the confessional.

3. Conversation was then a little slow in getting going. The main points which emerged were:—

- (a) In the view of all the businessmen present, the great majority of the white community in Rhodesia were still living at a very high standard—in some cases, at a higher standard than before i.d.i.

¹ The businessmen attending were: R W Brown, deputy manager, The Standard Bank Ltd; R Dyson, deputy chairman, Barclays Bank DCO; H E Hobbs, director, Tate & Lyle Ltd; R Marsh, CBI; J M Simon, director, The Dunlop Rubber Company; F J P Tate, Tate & Lyle Ltd; I R M Willis, The Metal Box Company (Overseas Ltd); T E Peppercorn (chairman, Triplex Holdings Ltd).

² P R A Mansfield, head of Rhodesia Dept, FCO, 1969–1972.

(b) There was no evidence suggesting that this situation could be brought to an end in the foreseeable future, or that enough economic pressure could be put on the bulk of the whites in Rhodesia to cause them either to leave Rhodesia or to oppose Mr. Smith's policies.

(c) Most of the whites in Rhodesia were not at all clear about the details of the proposed constitution³ or how their life would be affected if it were introduced; but saw no reason why they should make any difficulties for Mr. Smith on this account.

(d) Some of the younger whites in Rhodesia appeared to be rather discouraged about their future prospects in that country so long as the growth rate of its economy was hampered by sanctions, and most of these people either had left or would leave Rhodesia, mostly for the Republic of South Africa where they had no difficulty at all in obtaining suitable employment. (Mr. Willis of Metal Box Co. commented that when their Bulawayo factory was running on more or less a care and maintenance basis, most of their European staff had gone off to the group's factory in South Africa and immediately obtained work there.)

(e) So far as sanctions were hurting anyone in his day to day life in Rhodesia it was the Africans; the bulk of the Europeans knew little and cared less about this fact and its long term implications.

4. Most things (e.g. spare parts for factory machines, vehicles, precision tools, etc.) were now obtainable in Rhodesia, and the economy seemed to be picking up again—Mr. Simon of Dunlops said that their Rhodesia subsidiary was busier than it had been for a long time, while Mr. Willis of Metal Box said that their Salisbury factory had all the work it could handle and their Bulawayo factory, after an idle period, was now busy again.

5. Meanwhile, our competitors were busily engaged in supplying the imports from which we had cut ourselves off, notably the French, West Germans, Italians and Japanese (this last came from Mr. Simon of Dunlops and may be influenced by the availability of motor cars, etc. for which the Dunlop Rhodesian subsidiary no doubt provides tyres).

6. Mr. Hobbs of Tate & Lyle said that their sugar refineries were now active again, and that insofar as the consumption of sugar was one index of the standard of

³ New constitutional proposals were announced in Rhodesia in Feb 1969 and put to a vote in an all-white referendum on 20 June 1969. The scheme established separate voters' rolls for Europeans and Africans (the common roll was abolished), and limited African representation by setting an income tax qualification for the franchise (Africans in 1968 contributed only 0.5 per cent to income tax revenues). In a 66-member House of Assembly, Africans were to elect 8 African members, with a further 8 being chosen by chiefs. The Senate consisted of 10 Europeans, 10 chiefs and three appointees of the head of state. In the long-term, parity of African representation was fixed as the maximum obtainable; thus majority rule was ruled out. The division of land between the races was fixed under a Land Tenure Act that allocated 45 million acres each to 250,000 Europeans and 4.8 million Africans. 70 per cent of those voting in the referendum approved the constitution, with 80 per cent endorsing the proposal Rhodesia should become a republic (declared on 2 March 1970). After the referendum the British government broke ties with Rhodesia by closing the residual mission in Salisbury; Rhodesia House in London was also closed. The Labour government made no further attempts to negotiate with the regime after the referendum. On the security front there were no executions in Rhodesia in 1969 but thirty political prisoners remained under sentence of death, and 327 people remained in restriction or detention without trial. On 12 Feb the Rev N Sithole was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for incitement to murder.

living, it was relevant that sugar production seemed to be going up again. Mr. Simon claimed that the export of nickel last year had been worth £10 million (this does not seem to accord with any of the other evidence which we have on this subject, and I rather doubt whether on this point at least Mr. Simon knows what he is talking about).

7. Mr. Peppercorn drew attention to the risk that if we gave up applying sanctions against Rhodesia we might lose more in other African countries than we could hope to gain in Rhodesia. Little interest was shown in this aspect of the matter. Mr. Peppercorn also suggested that all the Companies represented on the CBI Committee on Rhodesia should be circularised by Mr. Marsh (Mr. Im Thurn has left the CBI), and invited to keep the CBI supplied on a confidential basis with any information which might come into their possession about the trend of developments in Rhodesia, economic and political, so that the CBI could keep us in turn supplied with a suitably expurgated version of the situation as seen by British industry. There seemed to be general agreement that this might be a useful step to take—Mr. Simon seemed to regard it as the first step towards the establishment of an industrial pressure group aimed at influencing the policy of whatever British Government resulted from the next general election—his hope was evidently that sanctions would be abandoned as a proven failure.

8. Mr. Peppercorn mentioned that Mr. Neville Bertram had decided to leave Rhodesia and settle in Britain, having reached the conclusion that there was no longer any hope of preventing things moving there in a to him unacceptable direction. Mr. Simon confirmed that Mr. Bertram had recently resigned his directorship of the Dunlop subsidiary in Rhodesia (Mr. Bertram is the author of the monthly surveys which we have been receiving via Sir Burke Trend and Mr. Eric Faulkner of Lloyds Bank).

9. During the conversation over the first part of lunch, Mr. Hobbs of Tate & Lyle and Mr. Simon of Dunlops were commenting to me on the situation in Zambia, with particular reference to the position of President Kaunda and of Mr. Sardaunis. Both of them had recently been in touch with President Kaunda over their Companies' affairs in Zambia. They both evidently had a high respect for President Kaunda as an honest man doing a good job for his country and as a man you could do business with. They did not appear particularly distressed by the suddenness of the announcement of the decision to take 51% of the copper mines equities. One of them did comment that the trouble with Zambia was that it was 'a one bullet show'—i.e. that if anything happened to President Kaunda, the prospects would be poor. As regards Mr. Sardaunis, they were agreed that he was a very sound practical businessman, though they thought a little too concerned to look after his own personal interests. But they both thought that he had accumulated so much power that as a white Zambian he was inevitably exposed to a great deal of black Zambian jealousy and resentment, and could not be regarded as a good long-term bet for that reason. Meanwhile, they did not regard him as being in any real sense anti-British, and thought that reports to that effect which used to be current were mainly the reflection of the dislike of him only too clearly shown by the European expatriates in Zambia during the early days of his rise to prominence.

242 FCO 36/597, no 22

7 May 1970

[Life in Rhodesia]: minute by J R A Bottomley on a meeting with Barbara Tredgold¹

I gave lunch today to Miss Barbara Tredgold, who arrived on holiday from Rhodesia two days ago. She expects to be in Britain for about three months, travelling around seeing the country and seeing friends.

2. For what they may be worth, here are some points she made during our conversation:—

(1) Sanctions are certainly having a real effect on life in Rhodesia, and it was a joy to wander round the full shops in London.

(2) Smith is not quite such a hero to the white electors as he used to be.

(3) Generally speaking, the Africans (with whom of course she has unusually close links through her work) distinguish between the Rhodesian authorities—whom they bitterly distrust—and other Europeans, with whom they are still prepared to deal on a basis of at least cautious friendship if given the opportunity: this was reflected in the fact that in the recent election, all the elected African seats had been won by Centre Party Africans.

(4) Smith is quite wrong in claiming that the Chiefs are with him; their position is rather that they have got used to his financial support (she said that he had recently raised their salaries) and also know that if there were a violent change they would be the first to be killed by the revolutionaries.

(5) (From a nephew who has recently been in the Territorial Service in the Zambesi Valley) the African battalions are magnificent. Miss Tredgold added that she could not help feeling that although it was inconceivable that the African soldiers would join with the infiltrating terrorists, they might nevertheless have a shot at leading an indigenous uprising on their own if they ever lost all hope of a reasonable settlement between whites and blacks.

(6) Rhodesian industries—above all Anglo-American—were making significant progress in putting Africans into worth-while jobs.

(7) But employment was very difficult for unskilled labourers to find and even educated African school-leavers were finding it much more difficult than a few years ago to get worth-while jobs. (Miss Tredgold pointed out that this was partly because there were so many educated African school leavers now so the competition for what jobs there were was much stiffer.)

(8) Partly because of drought conditions there was very little for African men to do in the Tribal Areas, and the District Officers were in fact encouraging them to move back to the towns, even though there was no work for them there.

(9) Newspaper reports (to which I referred) saying that large numbers of young Europeans were leaving Rhodesia were correct; Miss Tredgold referred to the children of some (unspecified) members of the regime itself; and she commented that some of the young Europeans leaving Rhodesia were going to work with Africans in Botswana and elsewhere. She commented that these were obviously just the people that Rhodesia could least afford to lose.

(10) Miss Tredgold doubted whether the laws against which the Churches were

¹ Her brother was Sir Robert Tredgold, former chief justice of Rhodesia.

currently protesting would in practice have much effect on her own Mission. She did not know whether the Anglicans would be as firm in their stance as the Catholics: she remarked that it looked as though for the first time a large section of the white population (i.e. the Catholics) were going to be seriously affected by the results of the regime's Apartheid policies. She commented that the Catholic laity were certainly not in agreement with the hierarchy and the priests on this matter, but that presumably if it came to a withdrawal of priests from Rhodesia the laity would have no final say in the matter.

3. I asked whether Miss Tredgold had been in touch recently with the former Governor² and Lady Gibbs. She said that she had not herself seen them, but her brother and his wife had stayed with them recently. According to their report, Lady Gibbs was still very far from well, but Sir Humphrey was fit and active, though more inclined than before to wonder whether he ought to have tried to lead a coup against Smith in the first few days after the illegal declaration of independence.

4. Miss Tredgold said that her brother (who had she claimed been an accurate prophet in the past) was now saying that he thought that there would be a settlement in the next few years, but a settlement which 'we (i.e. the Tredgolds) would not like'. Miss Tredgold said that what he was thinking of was a settlement which would enshrine white racialism. I told her that I thought this was most improbable, even if Sir Robert had been an accurate prophet in the past.

5. One point which is of perhaps more interest than the above was that Miss Tredgold had obviously got the impression that the fact that the Portuguese were recalling their Consul General meant that they had at last seen the light. I disillusioned her on this. But the fact that she had this impression may indicate that quite a number of other Rhodesians have it too—however, events no doubt will dissipate any such impressions in due course.

² Sir H Gibbs, the governor, resigned after the referendum of June 1969 in Rhodesia.

243 FCO 36/598, no 93

30 Dec 1970

[UDI]: letter from P Gautrey¹ to Sir J Johnston offering a new explanation of why UDI was declared in 1965

You may care to know of a brief conversation which I had an evening or two ago with a gentleman named Harper who, I believe, is a son of William John Harper the Rhodesian ex-Minister.

2. I gathered that Harper was here on a brief holiday. We met at a cocktail party where eventually the subject, perhaps inevitably, drifted on to Rhodesia and U.D.I. I told Harper that I had visited Salisbury a few months before U.D.I. and that, whenever I had spoken to Rhodesians on the subject, I had found that they had reacted emotionally to my questions and I was unable to learn the intellectual arguments (if any) in favour of U.D.I.

3. Harper told me that the main argument in favour of U.D.I. had been the practical one of stopping the heavy drain which was occurring on Rhodesian foreign

¹ UK high commissioner, Swaziland.

currency. According to Harner a sizeable number of British artisans who had migrated to Rhodesia since 1945 were leaving and taking with them their savings. This had created a drain on the reserves which the Rhodesian Government could not afford to allow to continue.

4. I report this to you because to the best of my recollection I have never heard this explanation before. However, as you were High Commissioner in Salisbury at that time I thought that I would feed this information in through you so that, if it is already well known, you can ignore my letter.

CHAPTER 10

The Commonwealth

Document numbers 244–281

244 CAB 148/17, OPD(64)12

11 Dec 1964

‘Commonwealth Secretariat’: memorandum by Mr Bottomley for Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee. *Annexes A-E*

At their meeting in July Commonwealth Prime Ministers agreed in principle to establish a Commonwealth Secretariat which, in the words of their final communiqué, ‘would be at the service of all Commonwealth Governments and would be a visible symbol of the spirit of co-operation which animates the Commonwealth’. The Secretariat would be available *inter alia* to disseminate factual information to all Member countries on matters of common concern and to help to co-ordinate, in co-operation with the host country, preparations for future meetings of Commonwealth Heads of Government and, where appropriate, of other Commonwealth Ministers. The Prime Ministers instructed their senior officials to consider the best basis for establishing a Secretariat.

2. It was hoped that a meeting of officials could be held in October, but this did not prove acceptable to other Commonwealth Governments. In preparation for this a document (Annex ‘A’) was circulated to all Governments, giving a general indication of British views. The meeting of officials has now been arranged to open in London on 5th January, 1965.

3. I am sure we should welcome this initiative, though we must recognise that the establishment of a Secretariat will lay us open to certain risks. Chief among these will be the temptation for certain of the newer Commonwealth countries to turn the Secretariat into an institutional, U.N.-type body, complete with voting procedures, lobbying and the like. We may also expect attempts to use the Secretariat in order to bring pressure to bear on us over e.g. Southern Africa and our colonial policies generally. At the other extreme countries such as India or Nigeria may, out of fear that the Secretariat could be used to interfere in their internal affairs, seek to restrict its function to an unrealistic minimum.

4. Against this background, the O.P.D. (Official) Committee has considered what detailed instructions our representatives to the meeting of senior Commonwealth officials should receive. I now circulate at Annexes ‘B’ to ‘E’ a series of papers prepared by the Committee, covering the Secretariat’s functions in the preparation and dissemination of factual material; its role in relation to Commonwealth meetings; its functions in the economic field and its relationship with other Commonwealth bodies.

5. I recommend that, subject to the principles set forth in Annex ‘A’ our representatives at the coming meeting should be guided by Annexes ‘B’ to ‘E’. I

further recommend that they should have the following points particularly in mind:—

- (a) That the Secretariat should not be allowed to develop in any way into a policy making body.
- (b) That its functions shall not include defence questions.
- (c) That in so far as they might touch upon our colonial interests any documents which the Secretariat sought to circulate, whether in its own name or on behalf of other Commonwealth Governments, shall be subject to our prior concurrence.
- (d) While working for the appointment of a strong and experienced Secretary-General, we should not aim to tie his hands at the outset with highly detailed terms of reference.

6. The Secretary-General will clearly have a key role to play. There is already a wide measure of agreement that the Secretariat should be sited in London. On political grounds, therefore, it would be best to look outside Britain for a suitable candidate. He will have to be a very senior and experienced officer, preferably from Canada, or Australia in the first place, though clearly if we are asked to provide one from Britain we should respond. A great deal will depend on his political judgement and on his ability to resist undue pressures from other Commonwealth countries.

7. The personal responsibilities devolving on the Secretary-General will be the greater if it is accepted that the Secretariat should not operate like a formalised, integrated international body. This in turn would mean that the Secretariat should not be subject to day to day control by a standing higher authority of e.g. Commonwealth High Commissioners in London. Any such elaboration would indeed increase the formality of the Secretariat's activities and tend to step up pressures for voting procedures. It would open the staff still more to continuous interference from individual Commonwealth Governments through their representatives in London. I therefore recommend against the establishment of any higher authority and propose that the Secretary-General should be responsible direct to Governments.

Recommendations

8. I recommend accordingly that:—
 - (i) We should support the proposal to establish a Commonwealth Secretariat, subject to the limitations on its functions in the fields of defence and colonial affairs to which I have drawn attention.
 - (ii) That our representatives should be guided by Annexes 'A' to 'E' in respect of the Secretariat's activities generally.
 - (iii) That we should work for the appointment of a strong Secretary-General, without at the same time tying his hands with over precise terms of reference.
 - (iv) That there should be no day to day supervision of the Secretariat's activities by any standing higher authority.

Annex A to 244: Commonwealth Secretariat; British working paper

This paper has been prepared by British officials not in order to attempt to suggest final conclusions, but to indicate the kind of issues which will require consideration

by the Working Group of Commonwealth officials and which will need to be borne in mind in any preliminary work before the officials meet.

2. In general, Member countries have seen a special value and importance in the Commonwealth as an association which in many different ways enables countries, from different regions of the world, consisting of a variety of races and representing a great number of interests and points of view, to share views and exchange opinions in a friendly, informal and intimate atmosphere. The organisation and functions of a Commonwealth Secretariat should be so designed as to assist in supporting and building on these fundamental elements in the Commonwealth association. At the same time the Commonwealth is not a formal organisation; it does not entrench on the sovereignty of individual members; and it does not seek to reach collective decisions or require united action. From this has flowed the flexibility and comprehensiveness of the Commonwealth which has enabled it to expand to its present large membership and has given it the strength it has today. Experience has proved that there are advantages in the informality of our arrangements which enables us to adapt them to meet changing circumstances; correspondingly there would be disadvantages in establishing too formal procedures and institutions in our association.

Organisation

3. In the course of discussions at the time of the Prime Ministers' Meeting in July it seemed to be the general view that the Secretariat should be organised along the following lines:—

- (I) Expenses should be shared by all Commonwealth Governments.
- (II) The Secretariat should be headed by a capable Secretary-General.
- (III) He should be supported by a small competent staff of officials drawn from Commonwealth countries generally.
- (IV) The Secretariat should work on an impartial basis; the loyalty and responsibility of the staff should be to the Commonwealth as a whole and they should not be regarded as representative of or responsible to their parent Governments.
- (V) The Secretariat should be set up in London.

4. If this is the wish of other Commonwealth Governments the British Government would be very happy to facilitate the establishment of the Secretariat in London.

5. While it is clearly right that the staff of the Secretariat should be drawn from as many different Commonwealth countries as possible, several delegations in July stressed that the main emphasis should be on quality and the recruitment of a thoroughly competent staff, and that, for this reason and also in order to keep down the total costs to be borne by Commonwealth Governments, the aim should be to keep the Secretariat small in size.

Functions

6. In the discussions in July no attempt was made to define closely the functions of the Secretariat. The general point was made that the Secretariat should not make recommendations or express views on issues of policy and that, in the words of the report circulated to Prime Ministers as P.M.M. (64)6, 'any extension of its functions

in this way, which would inevitably bring it into conflict with individual Commonwealth Governments, would be wrong in principle and disastrous for the Commonwealth concept which the Secretariat should be designed to promote'. Various possible functions were mentioned and these can be grouped under the following main headings:—

- (a) The Secretariat should have a role to play in connection with meetings of Commonwealth Prime Ministers and other Commonwealth meetings.
- (b) It should be a clearing house for factual information about external political affairs generally.
- (c) It should have a role to play in the economic and technical development fields.

Commonwealth meetings

7. It would seem appropriate that the Commonwealth Secretariat should arrange, in close co-operation with the host Government, for servicing Commonwealth Ministerial Meetings. In principle the Commonwealth Secretariat could similarly service Commonwealth-wide meetings at the official level; but practical difficulties might arise where such meetings are concerned with specialised or technical subjects and it may be best not to overload the Secretariat in the early stages.

8. It would also be appropriate for the Secretariat to circulate to Commonwealth meetings factual background papers, relevant to the agenda, of the kind which the Secretariat would provide as part of its normal day to day functions (paragraph 10 below).

9. Agenda for Commonwealth meetings have normally taken the form of a list of broad headings for discussion and have not been either rigid or detailed. This has proved a convenient arrangement in reaching agreement on the agenda among member Governments, and the use of broad headings has made it possible for the procedures at meetings to be sufficiently flexible to enable individual Governments to bring into the discussion matters in which they have a special interest. It would be important that, so far as its functions extend into this field the Secretariat should continue to conform to current practice.

Political information

10. In the discussions in July, emphasis was placed on the need for a clearing house for the circulation and provision of factual information about international political affairs. The point was made that many Commonwealth Governments are not in a position to obtain adequate factual information about contemporary events throughout the world. It would seem appropriate that the Secretariat should act as an information bureau which would assemble and disseminate information about important contemporary issues. There would seem to be a wide range of work which the Secretariat could usefully undertake in this field.

11. Among questions which require consideration are how far, consistent with the general consideration quoted in paragraph 6 above, the Secretariat should:—

- (a) be required to obtain the consent of a member Government before circulating material bearing on a matter of direct concern to that Government;
- (b) have authority itself to produce papers for circulation;
- (c) have authority to edit material supplied to it by member Governments.

The economic field

12. Similar questions arise in connection with the circulation of information on economic matters. In addition there is the consideration that, while there are no other Commonwealth organisations operating in the political field, there is a number of Commonwealth bodies already in existence which deal with economic matters. These include such organisations as the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council (comprising periodical meetings of Commonwealth Finance and Trade Ministers, other *ad hoc* meetings of Ministers and regular meetings of officials); the Commonwealth Liaison Committee; the Commonwealth Economic Committee.

13. The Secretariat might service meetings held under the aegis of the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council and also perhaps meetings of the Commonwealth Liaison Committee. The Commonwealth Economic Committee has a permanent staff with certain well defined functions for the provision of economic and statistical material and of reports on questions referred to it. It is desirable that this work should continue without interruption. But the Secretariat should be enabled to call upon the Committee's resources for economic information required for the Secretariat's reports; and the relationship between the staff of the Secretariat and the staff of the Committee may call for consideration.

14. It was the general view in the July discussions that the Secretariat might usefully function as a focus for the activities of the various Commonwealth organisations already operating in the economic field. It will be desirable to work out an appropriate relationship between the Secretariat and any machinery which may be set up to process the scheme for Commonwealth developments projects. Should an Adviser on these projects be appointed, it might prove convenient that he should, while operating independently, be able to rely on the Secretariat for secretarial and similar facilities. There may be other economic fields in which the Secretariat could play a useful role.

Summary

15. The precise functions and responsibilities of the Commonwealth Secretariat will require detailed and careful examination by the Working Group. The above are only suggestions. But the broad concept would seem to be that:—

- (a) the Secretariat could arrange for servicing Commonwealth meetings as appropriate;
- (b) the Secretariat's main function could be to assemble and disseminate factual information on political and economic matters of general concern;
- (c) if it is to be at the disposal of all Commonwealth Governments without distinction, the Secretariat should be seen to be impartial.

Annex B to 244: Functions of the Secretariat in the preparation and dissemination of factual material

The Secretariat's functions in the preparation and dissemination of material about both external political affairs and economic matters should be broadly as follows:—

- (a) The Secretary-General to have the initial responsibility for the preparation and dissemination of information.

(b) Subject to (c) to (f) below the Secretary-General to have discretion as to the form in which material prepared is circulated. The object should be to produce a balanced exposition of the various factors and considerations involved, but not to reach judgments or to express views on policy issues.

(c) The Secretariat to clear with the Commonwealth Government(s) concerned material prepared for circulation by another Commonwealth Government(s) or by the Secretariat itself which affects the former's policy interests, whether internal or external.

(d) It would be open to any Commonwealth Government to request studies by the Secretariat of particular issues. The Secretary-General would not be bound to comply with such a request. If in doubt as to the political wisdom of meeting such a request, it would be open to him to seek the views of other Commonwealth Governments.

(e) It would similarly be open to any Commonwealth Government to proffer factual information for circulation to other Commonwealth Governments; but the Secretary-General should have discretion to decide the appropriate distribution. If in the view of the Secretary-General material prepared by any Commonwealth Government was tendentious or likely to offend another member country he would refuse to circulate it.

(f) In order to comply with the accepted Commonwealth convention, no material prepared by the Secretariat should touch upon the internal policies of a member country unless this was done with the agreement of the Government concerned.

Annex C to 244: Commonwealth meetings

The British working paper suggested that it would be appropriate that the Commonwealth Secretariat should arrange for servicing Commonwealth Ministerial meetings, and also Commonwealth-wide meetings at the official level, except those concerned with specialised or technical subjects.

2. It is suggested that we should take the line that the Secretariat should be responsible for servicing meetings of Commonwealth Prime Ministers. The Secretariat should also service meetings of the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council, both at Ministerial and at official level, and meetings of the Commonwealth Liaison (Official) Committee.

3. The question whether the Secretariat should service other Ministerial and official meetings can, however, only be decided in the light of the circumstances of each individual case. It would seem undesirable for the Secretariat to undertake this function in relation to meetings of the Commonwealth Education Conference, the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee or the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board. We should therefore try to get it agreed that the Secretariat will not be regarded as responsible for servicing these or other meetings concerned with specialised or technical subjects (whether at Ministerial or at official level), though it would be appropriate that the Secretariat should be available on request to help in the servicing of all such meetings.

4. Where the Secretariat is responsible for servicing a meeting, its functions will include the circulation of papers, the production of minutes and the general organisation of the machinery of the meeting.

5. As stated in the British working paper, the Secretariat should be instructed to work throughout in close co-operation with the host Government, with whom would rest primary responsibility for such matters as accommodation, reception and entertainment.

6. The Secretary-General would arrange with the host Government for the provision of such secretarial assistance, required for servicing the meeting, as the Secretariat itself could not provide. We have proposed in the British working paper that the aim should be to keep the Secretariat small in size, and this is a consideration which some other Commonwealth Governments are known to have in mind. The Secretariat would not be able to provide from its own resources all the personnel required for a major Commonwealth Ministerial meeting unless it were permanently staffed on a scale which would be undesirable and costly.

7. It is to be expected that the majority of Commonwealth Governments will insist that the Secretariat should be responsible for the preparation of agenda, in consultation with Commonwealth Governments. If so, we must at least:—

- (a) ensure that the Secretary-General receives a directive, on the lines indicated in paragraph 9 of the British working paper, about the importance of drawing up agenda for Commonwealth meetings in the form of a list of broad headings for discussion:
- (b) ensure that direct consultation between Governments about the agenda is not excluded.

8. We should seek to establish that the timing and location of Prime Ministerial meetings are matters which can only be settled by direct correspondence between the Prime Ministers themselves and should be excluded from the responsibilities of the Secretariat. We need not, however, take so rigid a line in regard to other Ministerial and official meetings for the servicing of which the Secretariat will be responsible; in these cases, while we should not want any hard and fast rules to be laid down, the possibility might be left open that the Secretary-General might be used as the channel for consultation between Governments and possibly to take some initiative himself.

Annex D to 244: Economic work

As is indicated in Annex B, the problems which arise on the preparation and transmission to Commonwealth Governments by the Secretariat of information on economic subjects are broadly the same as those which arise in regard to information on political subjects.

2. Similarly the questions which arise for the Secretariat in respect of the servicing of Commonwealth meetings on economic subjects are the same as those which arise on other subjects, as is indicated in Annex D.

3. There may be pressure for the Commonwealth Secretariat to play a more important role than we envisage in economic matters. For example, there may be suggestions that it should:—

- (a) provide for developing Commonwealth countries to use in international gatherings such as the GATT and UNCTAD the sort of services that the UNCTAD

Secretariat-General provided for the developing countries generally at this year's Conference at Geneva;

(b) propose priorities for Commonwealth aid to developing countries in the Commonwealth;

(c) act as a central processing point for technical assistance enquiries and offers as between Commonwealth countries.

Any activities of this sort would require a very much larger organisation than we contemplate and we would not be alone among Commonwealth Governments in resisting these ideas. The best line on them may be to urge that the first thing must be to get the Secretariat established on a simple and realistic basis.

4. Paragraph 13 of the British working paper suggests that it is desirable that the work of the Commonwealth Economic Committee (C.E.C.) should continue without interruption, but that the Secretariat should be enabled to call upon the Committee's resources for economic information required for the Secretariat's reports and that the relationship between the staff of the Secretariat and the staff of the Committee may call for consideration.

5. It is recommended that the Commonwealth Secretariat should be able to seek assistance from the staff of the C.E.C. in preparing papers on economic matters which are themselves within the scope of the C.E.C. and that the Commonwealth Secretariat should not itself do work which the staff of the Committee could do for it. It is, however, necessary in this connection to bear in mind that the staff of the C.E.C., as at present composed, would have difficulty in doing more than statistical or analytical work and that their sphere is primarily trade, not finance. If papers prepared by them required the addition of an appreciation, this would probably have to be done by the Commonwealth Secretariat itself.

6. It would seem right for the staff of the C.E.C. to be able to seek assistance from Commonwealth Houses in London and from Departments of the British Government in the preparation by them of work for the Commonwealth Secretariat, as in respect of their other work. What they do for the Commonwealth Secretariat should, however, not be processed through the Committee itself. Such processing would involve a delay of months in the approval of most documents. It would be better for the approval of documents prepared by the C.E.C. staff for the Secretariat to be obtained by whatever processes the Secretariat elaborated for their own work.

7. The relationship between the staff of the Secretariat and the staff of the Committee will need consideration, because they will be the two main bodies located in London employing staff responsible to Commonwealth Governments generally. It could be argued that the head of the Secretariat should take over the present responsibilities of the Committee for settling the establishment of the latter's staff, appointing officers to the staff and fixing their emoluments. But Commonwealth Governments are likely to resist this and there is in fact no necessity for the arrangements for the C.E.C.'s staff to be the same as those for the Commonwealth Secretariat, because the former are mostly equivalent to executive grade officers in the Home Civil Service and must as a practical matter be locally recruited in London, while the Commonwealth Secretariat will be very largely administrative staff drawn from other Commonwealth countries. Much will depend on the status of the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Secretariat and his principal advisers, and on the relationship they are able to develop with the Chairman and staff of the C.E.C.

It might, however, be desirable to lay it down that before the Chairman or the Executive Secretary of the C.E.C. put proposals on staffing or administrative matters to the Committee, they should consult the Head of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

8. There is the further possibility that the Chairman of the C.E.C. might become a whole-time job and be doubled with that of the Principal Economic Adviser on the Commonwealth Secretariat. The best course might perhaps be to lay down that the Secretary-General of the Secretariat and the Chairman of the C.E.C. should consult together and that the Secretary-General should be instructed to submit recommendations about the relationship between the staff of the Secretariat and of the Committee.

Annex E to 244: Relationship of the Secretariat with other Commonwealth bodies

Apart from the special case of the two subordinate bodies of the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council (the Commonwealth Economic Committee and the Commonwealth Liaison Committee), which are dealt with in Annexes C and D respectively, there would be no immediate advantage in bringing any other of the intra-Commonwealth bodies formally under the control of the Secretariat. For the most part such bodies have a well-defined task to perform in some technical field, and the balance of advantage clearly lies in leaving them to continue on existing lines. It seems particularly important that the Secretariat should not be concerned with defence science and security matters.

2. There might, however, be advantage in the Secretary-General establishing personal relations with these various bodies and he might be invited to make contact with them accordingly. The Secretary-General might in particular be encouraged to explore the scope for an informal relationship and possibly some degree of co-operation between the Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation when the latter body is set up.

245 CAB 148/17, OPD(64)13

11 Dec 1964

‘Commonwealth Foundation’: memorandum by Mr Bottomley for
Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee. *Annex*

At their meeting in July, the Commonwealth Prime Ministers recorded in their final communiqué that:

‘it might be desirable to establish a Commonwealth Foundation to administer a fund for increasing inter-changes between Commonwealth organisations in professional fields. This Foundation could be administered by an independent Board; and, while it could be financed by contributions from Commonwealth Governments, it would also welcome support from all quarters, whether public or private.’

2. This scheme is to be examined by senior Commonwealth officials when they meet early in January next in London to consider plans for the Commonwealth Secretariat.

3. As a basis for these discussions my predecessor, in September, transmitted to other Commonwealth Governments possible terms of reference for the Foundation. I now circulate these at annex. I recommend that they should serve as a brief for our representative at the meeting of officials.

4. I also draw attention to the following:—

(i) At the Prime Ministers' Meeting the late Government announced their readiness to contribute half the annual costs of the Foundation, estimated at £250,000. We should clearly stand by this undertaking provided that other Commonwealth Governments prove willing to put up the balance. Nor should we exclude the possibility of attracting financial support for the Foundation from private sources. This of course would depend on the visible backing of Commonwealth Governments at the outset.

(ii) The countries from which the Chairman and Secretary-General (or preferably Director) of the Foundation are drawn will depend in part on the site selected for the Foundation's headquarters. On this point we had at first assumed that since the Commonwealth Secretariat is to be located in London, there would be opposition to establishing the Foundation here as well. While we shall not know the firm views of other Commonwealth Governments until the meeting of officials, informal soundings taken by our High Commissioners suggest that there is likely to be widespread acceptance of the view that as so many professional bodies working in the Commonwealth field are located in Britain, it would be sensible to establish the Foundation's headquarters here, at least in the early years. If we can achieve this result, then we shall need to look outside this country for a distinguished Commonwealth figure to serve as Chairman. It is not expected that his duties would be particularly onerous. The day to day work would fall on the Director and his small, permanent staff.

(iii) It should, of course, be one of the primary aims of the Foundation's staff to make early contact with other organizations, not least the British Council, working in the field of unofficial Commonwealth links and to ensure that duplication of effort is avoided.

5. The wide contacts which my Department has had with professional bodies in this country since the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting have disclosed increasing support for the proposed Foundation. I am convinced that such a body could do much to strengthen unofficial Commonwealth links. Among other things it could supplement interchanges of young professional people; encourage further intra-Commonwealth meetings among the professions, and bring about a greater and healthier growth of autonomous professional organizations in each Commonwealth country which, while working in close and friendly relations with our own, would ensure more lasting links on a basis of equality.

6. I accordingly recommend that:—

(a) The annexed terms of reference should serve as instructions to our representatives at the coming meeting of senior Commonwealth officials.

(b) We should confirm our readiness to contribute half the cost of the Foundation's annual charges, subject to other Commonwealth Governments subscribing the balance.

(c) We should support any proposal to establish the Foundation's headquarters initially in London.

Annex to 245: Possible terms of reference

The basic aims of the Commonwealth Foundation shall be the following:—

- (i) To encourage a greater flow of professional visits throughout the Commonwealth, with particular emphasis on
 - (a) members of the professions in the newer Commonwealth countries;
 - (b) young professional people.
 - (ii) To stimulate and to increase the flow of professional information exchanged between the organisations concerned.
 - (iii) To assist professional bodies within the Commonwealth to hold more Conferences between themselves.
 - (iv) On request to assist professions in other Member countries to set up their own national institutions where they have not yet been able to do so.
 - (v) To promote the growth of intra-Commonwealth associations in order to reduce the present concentration of professional organisations with headquarters in Britain.
 - (vi) Where appropriate, to provide funds for the promotion of research into the activities of professional organisations working in the Commonwealth field.
 - (vii) To be prepared, exceptionally, to consider requests for assistance to associations and individuals whose work lies outside the strictly professional field, but falls within the general aims and limits outlined above, and to whom government or other aid is not available.
2. The Foundation shall be an autonomous body.
 3. The initial annual funds available to the Foundation shall be not less than £250,000. Of this the British Government will undertake to subscribe £125,000.
 4. It shall be open to the Board of Trustees of the Foundation to seek contributions from other Commonwealth Member Governments and from private sources.
 5. The Chairman of the Foundation shall be a distinguished citizen of a Commonwealth Member country.
 6. The appointment of the Chairman shall be subject to the approval of all Member governments contributing to the funds of the Foundation and shall be for a period of 'A' years initially.
 7. The salary and allowances of the Chairman shall be of the order of 'B'.
 8. The Foundation shall consist jointly of the Chairman, a Board of Trustees and an Executive Committee.
 9. The Board of Trustees shall meet at least once annually to decide on general policy and principles and on the broad areas of professional activity for which funds shall be made available; and to issue directives for the ensuing year's work.
 10. Each subscribing Member Government shall have the right to nominate one representative to the Board of Trustees.

(N.B. If the headquarters of the Foundation were established in a major Commonwealth capital, Commonwealth High Commissioners resident there might most conveniently represent their Governments; the host Government nominating a special representative of its choice.)
 11. The Executive Committee shall be a standing body meeting not less than six times annually in order to take decisions on current applications for assistance. The

Executive Committee shall consist of not less than six and not more than eight representatives selected in rotation from among all subscribing Member countries. (High Commissioners might again prove the most suitable representatives.)

12. The Foundation shall be served by a Secretary-General selected from a Commonwealth country other than that supplying the Chairman. His appointment shall be approved by all contributing Member Governments, and his term of office shall be subject to negotiation. His salary shall be £X per annum plus appropriate allowances. The Secretary-General's supporting staff shall consist initially of one Assistant; one accountant and appropriate clerical assistance.

13. The Headquarters of the Foundation shall be established at 'C'.

246 CAB 148/17, OPD 5(64)2 17 Dec 1964 **'Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly': Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee minutes**

The Committee had before them a memorandum by the Commonwealth Secretary (O.P.D. (64) 14) about a Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly.

The Commonwealth Secretary said that in the previous February the Prime Minister had spoken in the House of Commons in favour of a 'Commonwealth Consultative Committee leading to a full Council of the Commonwealth'. The proposal had also been mentioned in the Labour Party Election Manifesto. At his request the Clerk of the House of Commons had prepared a draft scheme for a Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly and this was annexed to his memorandum. It provided for an Assembly of some 126 members who would meet annually for 10 days. Representation would be broadly on a population basis. The first meeting might take place in London, to coincide with the ceremonies marking the 700th anniversary of the Parliament of Simon de Montfort.¹ Thereafter annual meetings might rotate among the major Commonwealth capitals. He recognised that a body of this kind would raise certain difficulties and might subject the United Kingdom to pressure on such issues as Southern Rhodesia, South Africa or our colonial aid and defence policies. Voting procedures might be introduced and such a development would be alien to the spirit of the informal Commonwealth association. Nevertheless, such dangers might be avoided or overcome and might be outweighed by the value of the Assembly in strengthening Commonwealth links and in sustaining Parliamentary traditions in the newer Member countries. As a first step he proposed that Ministers should discuss the ideas with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and, if they agreed, then seek the views of other Commonwealth Governments with a view to a scheme being considered by Commonwealth Prime Ministers at their next meeting.

In discussion it was argued that the Commonwealth Secretary's proposal went substantially beyond the proposal that had been put forward by the Prime Minister

¹ English soldier, born in Normandy (c 1208–1265); led baronial opposition to Henry III whom he defeated at Lewes (Sussex) in 1264. He summoned a parliament in 1265 but was killed in the same year by reorganised royal forces under Henry's son who later became Edward I. Although the claim is exaggerated, the House of Commons is said to have its origins in Simon de Montfort's parliament.

and the Labour Party Manifesto. It was by no means clear what the role of the proposed Assembly would be and this might result in frustration on the part of its members. The large preponderance of members from the Afro-Asian Members of the Commonwealth might create difficulties for the older Commonwealth countries and it would in any event be advisable to seek the latter's views confidentially in the first instance. Consideration should also be given to the possibility of representation from the dependent territories. Having regard to the dangers of the introduction of pressure groups and voting procedures in a Parliamentary Assembly which might create embarrassment for the United Kingdom and would be alien to the spirit of the Commonwealth association, it would on this view be preferable to start with confidential discussions on the more modest proposal for an initial Consultative Committee.

On the other hand, it was maintained that the role of the Consultative Committee would also be far from clear and that it might well overlap either with the proposed Commonwealth Secretariat or with meetings of Commonwealth Ministers. The Assembly would provide a forum for serious discussion by members of Commonwealth Parliaments and this might strengthen Commonwealth consciousness, particularly in the newer Member countries.

Summing up the discussion *The First Secretary of State* said that having regard to the division of view in the Committee on the merits of the Commonwealth Secretary's proposals it would be best that in the first instance he should discuss these further with the Prime Minister in the light of the latter's intentions in putting forward his proposal in February for a Commonwealth Consultative Committee.

The Committee:—

Invited the Commonwealth Secretary to discuss his proposals with the Prime Minister in accordance with the summing up by the First Secretary of State.

247 CAB 148/17, OPD 9(65)4, 5 & 6 10 Feb 1965 'Commonwealth': Cabinet Defence and Oversea Policy Committee minutes on the Secretariat, Foundation and Parliamentary Assembly

4. *Commonwealth Secretariat*

(Previous Reference: O.P.D. (64) 5th Meeting, Item 1)

The Committee had before them a memorandum by the Commonwealth Secretary (O.P.D. (65) 31) to which was attached the report of the Commonwealth officials who had met in London in January 1965 to frame recommendations on the establishment of a Commonwealth Secretariat.

The Commonwealth Secretary said that the meeting of officials had produced an agreed report; its recommendations were subject to the approval of all Commonwealth Governments and final decisions could probably not be taken before the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting in June. The proposed functions of the Secretariat were, however, in line with the Government's policy and he recommended that the report should be approved in principle. The Secretariat's relations with other intra-Commonwealth bodies would be further examined at a later stage, by a small independent committee with which the Secretary-General would be associated. The Secretariat would on request assist Member Governments

in considering development projects and there would be in consequence no need to appoint an independent Commonwealth Development Adviser. Early agreement between Governments on those parts of the report dealing with the personal position of the Secretary-General might make it possible for a suitable candidate to be selected in time to be the Secretary of the next Prime Ministers' meeting.

There were three points on which decisions were required:—

(i) The report recommended that the Commonwealth Secretariat should be authorised to circulate papers on the constitutional progress of dependent territories on the understanding that the administering Governments would always be 'closely consulted' in their preparation. The United Kingdom, Australian and New Zealand representatives had reserved their position on the question whether the Secretary-General should also be obliged to ascertain that the responsible Governments 'saw no objection' to the circulation of any particular paper. He proposed that, if it were acceptable to the Australians and New Zealanders, we should be ready to agree to a formula by which we would have the right to call on the Secretariat to circulate our comments on any views on the dependent territories which the Secretariat had circulated and with which we did not agree.

(ii) The United Kingdom should be prepared to make a contribution of some £47,000 to an estimated budget for the first full year of £157,000.

(iii) There had been considerable pressure on the United Kingdom from all the other members of the Commonwealth to agree that all the senior staff of the Secretariat recruited from outside Britain should be accorded immunities and privileges appropriate to the diplomatic staff of High Commissions and that such immunities and privileges should not be restricted, as we had proposed, to the 'High Officers' only. The United Kingdom representative had undertaken to have the question reconsidered and he recommended that the Committee on Immunities and Privileges should be invited to re-examine it urgently and to report to the Home Affairs Committee.

In discussion the following points were made:—

(a) The activities of the Secretariat on colonial questions could be highly embarrassing to us, particularly in relation to such issues as Southern Rhodesia and British Guiana. In view of the attitude of the majority of Commonwealth countries it might be difficult to exclude such questions from the Secretariat's competence; nevertheless we should seek to ensure that any papers they produced about colonial matters were agreed in advance with us, although we might, if necessary, accept a compromise whereby they would undertake to circulate simultaneously with their paper one containing our comments.

(b) The scale of remuneration and of privileges proposed was higher than that enjoyed by comparable bodies, such as the Secretariat of Western European Union and this might well cause us embarrassment. The Secretary-General himself should however be treated as a special case since the highest qualifications would be required for this post. The scale of privileges should be further examined by the Committee on Immunities and Privileges. Meanwhile we should reserve our position on this and on the scale of remuneration. Our position could then be further considered in the light of reactions from other Commonwealth Governments on this aspect.

(e) There was considerable proliferation of organisations concerned with the Commonwealth. There might be economy and enhanced efficiency if some of these could be absorbed by the Secretariat.

(d) Nominations for the post of Secretary-General would be considered separately.

The Committee:—

Approved O.P.D. (65) 31, subject to the points made in discussion.

5. *Commonwealth Foundation*

(Previous Reference: O.P.D. (64), 5th Meeting, Item 2)

The Committee had before them a memorandum by the Commonwealth Secretary (O.P.D. (65) 32) to which was attached a report by the meeting of Commonwealth officials in London in January 1965 on the proposed establishment of a Commonwealth Foundation.

The Commonwealth Secretary said that the recommendations in the report were only in general terms and the absence of firmer recommendations was disappointing. However, the proposals were broadly in line with the Government's policy and he recommended that the report should be approved in principle. Officials had suggested that the next step might be for more detailed proposals to be elaborated by the Commonwealth High Commissioners in London and the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Secretariat, when he was appointed. In order to give some further impetus to the scheme, however, he proposed that, when he was informing other Commonwealth Governments of our acceptance of the report in principle, he should also undertake to send them some more detailed suggestions on the administrative, financial and other matters connected with the Foundation, perhaps including the names of possible candidates for the posts of Chairman and Director. By this means he hoped that specific proposals might be ready for discussion by the Commonwealth Prime Ministers in June.

In discussion it was agreed that a Commonwealth Foundation on the lines proposed by the Commonwealth Secretary should not be opposed, though it should not lead to any further increase in non-official bodies concerned with the Commonwealth unless these proved essential. It was also suggested that in accordance with the Government's policy for decentralisation, the headquarters of the Foundation might be in some other member country or, if in the United Kingdom, at least in a city other than London. Doubt was however expressed whether this would be acceptable to other Commonwealth Governments.

The Committee:—

Approved O.P.D. (65) 32, subject to the points made in discussion.

6. *Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly*

The Committee had before them a memorandum by the Commonwealth Secretary (O.P.D. (65) 33) on proposals for a Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly.

The Commonwealth Secretary said that, in the light of the Committee's discussion on the 17th December, 1964 (O.P.D. (64) 5th Meeting, Item 2) he had given further thought to the proposal to convene a Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly on a 'once-for-all' basis to coincide with ceremonies marking the 700th anniversary of the de Montfort Parliament in June 1965. For the reasons set out in his paper he had come to the conclusion that it would be wiser to postpone such an

Assembly until the Easter recess, 1966. It might prove desirable to build up such an Assembly on the foundation of the meetings of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (C.P.A.), which were already moving towards Parliamentary procedures. This could be further considered after the C.P.A. conference in New Zealand in November 1965.

In discussion there was considerable support for the view that it might not accord with United Kingdom interests if the Assembly were later to develop into a continuing body, and that to hold it even on a once-for-all basis might lead to pressure for such a development which would be difficult to resist. There might be advantage if its singularity could be emphasised by holding it to mark the anniversary of some significant event in Commonwealth history. It would in any event be necessary to consider closely in the light of the outcome of such an Assembly what attitude we should adopt to any subsequent suggestion that further meetings should be arranged.

The Committee:—

(1) Took note of O.P.D. (65) 33.

(2) Invited the Commonwealth Secretary to pursue the proposal for a once-for-all meeting of a Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly on the lines proposed in his paper and taking account of the points made in discussion.

(3) Took note that the Commonwealth Secretary would make a further report in due course.¹

¹ This proposal (for a once-for-all meeting) was not pursued.

248 DO 193/81, no 1

1 July 1965

[New concept of the Commonwealth]: minute by P Rogers¹

[Burke Trend sent Garner a copy of this minute written by Rogers to the Cabinet secretary after the 1965 meeting of Commonwealth prime ministers. The Cabinet secretary favoured a discussion of Roger's suggestion that there might be advantage in carrying out a study of a new concept of the Commonwealth. Garner agreed with much of the minute but wanted to consult his CRO colleagues about a study. He was, however, 'puzzled' by two passages in the minute. First, he knew nothing of the alleged antagonism of much of the rest of Whitehall to the old concept of the Commonwealth, nor why officialdom believed the CRO held outmoded views and was not prepared to stand up for Britain's long-term interests. Secondly, he regarded the last sentence of the minute as 'a complete non-sequitur'. And he explained: 'Whether we believe in the old or new concept of the Commonwealth is quite irrelevant, surely, to the fact that a large number of Commonwealth Governments would be affected substantially by our "entry into Europe" and, in our own self interest, we should be bound to take their views into account. This applies particularly on the economic, but also on the political, side. If, for example, closer relations with Europe involve a continuing military commitment which makes it less possible for us to exercise a role East of Suez, Australia for one is directly affected' (DO 193/81, minute, 14 July 1965).]

I submit below some paradoxical thoughts arising from the recent Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers. They are somewhat disconnected, but I offer no apology for that because this minute is in no way designed even as a sketch of a fully

¹ Assistant under-secretary of state, CO, 1953–1961; under-secretary, Dept of Technical Co-operation, 1961–1964; deputy secretary, Cabinet, 1964–1967; Treasury, 1967–1970, permanent secretary, Dept of Health and Social Security, 1970–1975; KCB 1970.

considered study. I offer it rather as presenting a series of points which suggest the need for such a study (you will recognise this as one of my 'King Charles' heads' and I should perhaps offer an apology for taking it out of the cupboard and giving it another airing!).

- (1) I believe that the last Meeting offers a new hope for the future of the Commonwealth—precisely because it has in my view so effectively destroyed lingering ideas of the old concept.
- (2) I suggest that the Commonwealth Secretariat, which were [sic] thought of in several quarters as reinforcing the old concept (although as you know I strongly disagreed on that) may yet turn out to be what is needed for a new concept.
- (3) The last Meeting seemed to me a striking demonstration of neo-Colonialism—yet not on our part but on the part of the newly emergent countries.
- (4) And finally I suggest that a new concept of the Commonwealth should be based on a return to the old principles (of the Balfour declaration² of equal nations 'in no way subordinate one to the other').

I try below to justify these paradoxes.

(1) *The nature of the Commonwealth*

Our Commonwealth policy in the last decade seems to me to have suffered from our attempt to maintain its original concept as a cohesive body with common interests, whose Heads of Government meet from time to time for secret and informal discussion and all of whose members recognise The Queen, either as Queen or as Head of the Commonwealth, with some meaning attached to that phrase. All this seems to me to have gone and I hope that the last Meeting has effectively removed the last lingering sentiments about it.

- (a) The Commonwealth is clearly not a cohesive group any longer in the sense that apart from the Anglocentricity which is deplored by the Commonwealth Relations Office and to which I refer to again below, there is no real common interest. One had only to see the Tunku and Mr. Sangster³ fast asleep during the plea of the Africans on the dangers to world peace in Africa, quite apart from the obvious distaste of some of the Asian members at some of the African interventions, to realise that this is so.
- (b) The attempt to maintain meetings of Heads of Government as informal secret occasions is clearly no longer possible.
- (c) Finally, I cannot for the moment think that the concept of The Queen as Head of the Commonwealth has any real meaning (which is a very different thing from saying that the pageantry, and frankly the snobbery, attached to attending functions at the Palace may not be extremely valuable. I have always thought of snobbery in this context as being a most useful force!)

(2) The Commonwealth Secretariat could be most damaging if it led to any organisation of the Commonwealth as a cohesive body which might in the course of

² The Balfour Declaration of 1926 described the then dominions as 'autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.'

³ Tunku Abdul Rahman, prime minister of Malaysia (see 4, note 7) and D B Sangster, deputy prime minister and finance minister, Jamaica, 1962–1967, prime minister Feb–Apr 1967 (deceased).

time adopt voting procedures on United Nations lines (you will be familiar with my views on this from past discussion and I will not reiterate them here). But I regard it as potentially useful to a new concept, because I believe that our continuing responsibility for the organisation of Prime Ministers' Meetings in accordance with the old concept has become an embarrassment to United Kingdom interests, since whereas we for our part have felt inhibited in making full use of our position, the newer Commonwealth Governments have in no way been inhibited from disregarding the old rules. This development will, I suggest, also free the Commonwealth Relations Office from the embarrassment of its dual role of furthering United Kingdom interests and of being a central Commonwealth organisation.

(3) The newly independent members of the Commonwealth have for some time been demonstrating the strength of new-Colonialism (which I think properly means a colonial attitude persisting after independence). By this I do not mean that we have in any serious manner attempted to use our historical position or our continuing aid and trade in order to retain influence on a neo-colonialist basis. On the contrary, I maintain that it is the attitude of the new independent countries that has been neo-colonialist, in the sense that they have maintained after independence the characteristic of colonial politicians in the last stages of dependent territories, i.e. they feel free to make any criticism they wish, or any demand they wish, of the 'imperial' power, but regard any criticism or demand by the latter as an expression of imperialism automatically to be resented. While the 'double standard' will undoubtedly continue for some time, I think that in future we can and should feel freer to return to the Balfour principles and claim equality of treatment! In other words this, together with the aspect discussed at (2) above, means that under the old concept we have, in my view, been handicapped by having to run meetings, so giving the appearance of maintaining the leading reins without in fact having any power to control whatsoever, or indeed any power of using the reins when horses kick over the traces.

(4) The Commonwealth Relations Office have for some time deplored the Anglocentricity of the Commonwealth because this made it difficult to get acceptance of the concept of the Commonwealth as a cohesive group, with general Commonwealth interests. I suggest that on the contrary that it is only Anglocentricity that holds the Commonwealth together (just as in a different way it holds EFTA together). While, therefore, we may deem it expedient to seek to mask this, I suggest that we should no longer think it in accordance with our interests to seek to thrust upon Commonwealth countries concepts which suggest that there is such a thing as a general Commonwealth interest, such as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly (which indeed they have just decisively rejected themselves).

So far all this has been destructive. Let me now offer one or two thoughts of a more constructive nature.

To suggest that the old concept of the Commonwealth no longer has any meaning does not in my view mean that there is not a continuing value to this country in our Commonwealth connections. On the contrary, I believe there is. Our past connections, the present use of the English language in Commonwealth countries, the widespread and increasing educational links and the many other links e.g. between professions, all seem to me to offer us a potent source of influence, which is of value to this country. While we should, I think, continue to work (as we have done in practice for some years) for a particularly close connection with Australia and New

Zealand and a slightly less close connection with Canada, let us now consider what kind of continuing relationship will enable us to make the best use of the means of influence to which I have referred. This may well mean continuing with arrangements in the old form, but with a new point of view. I believe that it would be valuable to the Government as a whole if we could work out a generally acceptable new policy on these lines, since at the moment the effectiveness of the Commonwealth Relations Office in seeking to use our Commonwealth advantages is in my view handicapped by the antagonism of much of the rest of Whitehall to the old concept of the Commonwealth, which they mistakenly believe the Commonwealth Relations Office still holds.

I suggest that there might be advantage in carrying out a study of what a new concept of the Commonwealth on these lines, which would of course be very much the culmination of a process lasting over the last ten to fifteen years, should involve institutionally, where United Kingdom interests would lie in it and what policy we should pursue to obtain the maximum advantage for the United Kingdom from it. One important aspect of this would, I think, be that the Commonwealth in this case would not purport to be (what the old Commonwealth surely was, despite disclaimers) something which inhibited our closer relations with Europe.

249 DO 161/284, no 2

13 July 1966

‘Prime ministers’ meetings and the expanding Commonwealth’: CRO note of a meeting with the Canadian deputy high commissioner

Mr. Murray (Deputy High Commissioner for Canada) called at his request at the C.R.O. at 6.30 p.m. on the 7 July, 1966 and had a discussion with the P.U.S., Sir Burke Trend, Sir Hilton Poynton and Sir Neil Pritchard about his letter of the 4 July.

2. Mr. Murray said that interest in the problem had been renewed in Ottawa because Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Barbados would shortly all be becoming independent and would wish to be full Members of the Commonwealth. The Canadian Prime Minister wished to consider whether it would be advantageous to suggest at the Prime Ministers’ Meeting in September that a small group of senior Commonwealth officials might be asked to make a study following up the work done by the Study Group which met at Chequers in 1960.¹ There was the feeling in Ottawa that Prime Ministers’ Meetings were getting too big for useful and effective policy discussions and that it might be possible to devise some procedural arrangements for Prime Ministers’ Meetings which would reduce the number round the table. One possibility might be extended use of Committees with more limited membership on a regional or subject-wise basis. Mr. Murray admitted that Canada had no considered proposals of her own to put forward.

3. In the course of the discussion it was pointed out that there were broadly two ways of dealing with the problem:—

- (i) limiting membership on a population basis (in line with current ideas about ‘mini-States’ in the U.N.)
- (ii) procedural arrangements.

¹ See Hyam and Louis, eds, *The Conservative government and the end of empire 1957–1964*, part II, 534.

The following points were made on which there was general agreement:—

(a) The Chequers Study Group in 1960 had considered a whole range of possible ideas, including rotational representation of smaller countries at Prime Ministers' Meetings, regional meetings and new procedural arrangements of various kinds at Prime Ministers' Meetings. They had seen insuperable objections to the various alternatives they had considered.

(b) The difficulty about any idea of joint representation on a regional basis was that, in all regions of the Commonwealth, some or all of the Governments concerned objected to being represented by one of their colleagues. Moreover, those coming to Prime Ministers' Meetings were Heads of Government with their own home audiences and would wish to take part in discussions of general issues and be known to be doing so.

(c) It might be possible at Prime Ministers' Meetings to remit certain subjects for consideration by a small group of Prime Ministers sitting as a Committee. This procedure might perhaps be adopted in dealing with the item on Disarmament at next September's Meeting. But in general it was very unlikely that many subjects would arise for which the Committee system would be suitable; for instance most of the time in September would be taken up by the discussions on Rhodesia, international affairs and the world economic situation and all Prime Ministers would wish to be present for all these discussions (even if they did not all speak on all subjects). The Committee system could only afford a very marginal amelioration of the difficulties and did not go to the root of the problem.

(d) One suggestion which had been made by the Chequers Study Group was that more time should be made available for informal contacts during the course of a Prime Ministers' Meeting. This could be very valuable if it could be arranged, though hitherto it had been extremely difficult to limit the time spent on meetings round the table.

(e) There were three countries (Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Barbados) which would become independent before the end of 1966 and were seeking full Commonwealth Membership. A further three (Mauritius, Swaziland and British Honduras) would be independent within the next two to three years. Of these British Honduras was particularly difficult because it had a population of only just over 100,000. Of the others, Swaziland (285,000) and Barbados (242,000) were only marginally smaller than such existing Members as Malta and the Gambia, with populations of around 325,000. There was the potential problem that the Associated States in the West Indies, each with a tiny population, had each the option to choose full independence at any time in the future. In discussions which British officials had been having with the United States, the general thought had been that a figure of 100,000 would probably have to be accepted if there were to be a population criterion for membership of the United Nations (the Maldives with a population of just under 100,000 are already a member of the United Nations).

(f) It seemed clear that, at this point in the evolution of the Commonwealth, there was no way of preventing the admission of small States to Commonwealth Membership.

(g) It would be undesirable to throw the problem open for discussion in a full Prime Ministers' Meeting unless there were some real prospects of concrete and workable proposals being evolved. Moreover a discussion in a full meeting would be

embarrassing as many of the existing smaller Members would regard the item as being directed at their own position and this could be particularly awkward since the majority of smaller Commonwealth countries were either African or with populations of African extraction. It was not thought likely that any other Prime Minister would raise this particular matter in the course of discussion on the item about constitutional progress in the British Dependencies, provided that the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia were agreed that they would not raise it themselves.

4. It was agreed that it might be valuable, as a first step, for a group of Canadian, Australian and British officials to meet together, preferably in London, for private talks on the problem, if possible before the Prime Ministers' Meeting in September, with the object of assessing whether there was any prospect of helpful and workable proposals being evolved. There seemed to be no need for a new message from Mr. Pearson² to Mr. Wilson. Mr. Murray undertook to report back accordingly to Ottawa, and the P.U.S. said that he would sound out Australian officials who were at present in London with Mr. Holt.³

² Lester Pearson, prime minister of Canada, 1963–1968.

³ Pearson had raised this question with Wilson in 1965 and, referring to the study by officials in 1960, he expressed concern that while the study had anticipated a maximum of twenty-four new members of the Commonwealth by 1970, membership was fast approaching the same figure after only five years. Independence had been granted to countries which were 'not thought to be in the running at all' five years ago. Asking again if criteria ought to be established for membership, Pearson revealed that in three recent cases (he did not name the countries but see 284, para 21(iii) for details), his government had entertained doubts about membership; he added that the previous Canadian government had reservations in the case of one other. In two of the four cases he suggested Canadian misgivings had been justified. Replying, Wilson pointed out that countries considered eligible for UN membership could hardly be denied access to the Commonwealth. He outlined current British thinking on the question, and named those countries expected to become independent over the next few years. He explained that while the grant of independence was a question for Britain to decide, it had always been British policy to let existing members decide Commonwealth membership. If a country indicated its wish to remain within the Commonwealth, Britain saw no alternative to letting it be known it would support that country's application. But Britain had not applied this policy 'slavishly or automatically'. Cyprus was a case in which the UK initially thought full membership would not be suitable, and efforts had been made to persuade the Gambians to accept association with Senegal. The Gambian example illustrated the 'fundamental nature of the problem'. If Britain were to be guided, not only by its 'historic policy' and the UN Charter but also 'the moral standards which seem to us right, we can only do our best to ensure that the future of each dependent territory is decided as fairly as possible by the territory itself' (PREM 13/185, nos 122A & 11A, Pearson to Wilson, 25 Mar 1965, and Wilson's reply, by CRO tel 874, 13 Apr 1965).

250 DO 193/79, no 1

9 Nov 1966

'Planning exercise: the Commonwealth as a British interest': circular letter from R Walker¹ to UK high commissions

We have been most interested to read replies from posts to my letter No. 2-CON. 386/11 (47) of 26 September in which I asked for an assessment of local reactions to the September 1966 Prime Ministers' Conference² and of the possible future development of these meetings. We are digesting these replies and hope in due course to circulate a paper based on them and on our own thoughts.

¹ See 173, note 3.

² See 217, note 4.

2. In the meantime there is considerable public discussion, sometimes uninformed and unimaginative, in Britain of the value to this country of the Commonwealth relationship. Against this background Ministers are giving renewed consideration to Britain's future relationship with E.E.C. Irrespective of whether or not it is for Britain a question of alternatives—*either* Europe *or* the Commonwealth—it is nevertheless probable that at some stage Ministers will call for a thorough assessment of the value of the Commonwealth to Britain.

3. The notice we receive in such a requirement is likely to be short. We therefore think it prudent to anticipate it by starting now on some of the groundwork and I attach an outline of the study we propose to undertake.

4. Some of the ground has already been covered (for instance, in Planning papers on British action in the event of a country leaving the Commonwealth and in the papers under reference in paragraph 1 above). While I would not wish to add to your labours by asking you to repeat views which you have already so recently expressed, I hope you will draw our attention to points appearing in earlier correspondence to which you attach particular importance. It will be useful for distinction to be drawn between:—

- (i) those advantages which are entirely due to the Commonwealth connection and which would fall away if it were ruptured;
- (ii) those which would continue unchanged even if the connection were broken;
- (iii) those which would be diluted in these circumstances.

5. An important aspect of all this of course is the attitude of individual Member countries. If a country sees its membership purely selfishly, is not prepared to give up anything for it and would leave the Commonwealth directly it appeared to offer no further financial/practical advantage this must clearly affect our own attitude. (But we would suppose that such narrowness of view, going far beyond tolerable enlightened self-interest, is not in fact common.)

6. We should of course appreciate as well as an assessment of the views of the country in which you are serving the views of yourself and your colleagues on these matters. It would be helpful if you could let us have a considered reply by the end of November.

7. I am copying this to Peter Moon in New York and would welcome any comments he may care to make.

Annex to 250

The ultimate aim of the study is to provide Ministers and senior Whitehall officials with a comprehensive review of the extent to which British interests are affected by the Commonwealth. To do this thoroughly will take some time and will in due course draw in a number of Government Departments. For the first stage of the exercise, however, only the Commonwealth Office and posts will be involved.

2. In our approach to the study we assume that world stability (though not at any price) is a cardinal aim in British external policy. Overall we shall try to assess the importance of the Commonwealth (both as it exists now and as it may develop) as a factor in world stability though we shall also have appropriate regard to the impact of the association on domestic developments in Britain.

3. We shall go on to consider the extent to which the existence and nature of the Commonwealth depends on the British contribution to the Commonwealth relationship.

4. Against this background the subject will be examined under the following headings:—

- A. Political
- B. Economic
- C. The Intangibles

We shall consider each section from the point of view of

- (a) Bilateral relations with Britain.
- (b) Relations with other Commonwealth countries.

5. Posts are encouraged to exercise the freedom which this broad subject confers. While each will speak with special authority about the Commonwealth relationship as it affects one particular Member country, it will be helpful to have views on the region of which the country forms a part and on the Commonwealth as a whole.

6. The following topics and questions are therefore in no way intended to limit the scope of individual replies but rather to serve as guide-posts:

(a) *The Commonwealth as a whole*

Does membership have any significant influence on the policies of the host government? Would a reduced British political and economic effort in the Commonwealth influence the attitude of the host Government towards the Commonwealth? Would a closer relationship between Britain and E.E.C. be regarded as weakening Britain's ties with the Commonwealth and hence as inevitably diluting the value and strength of the association as a whole.

(b) *Representation*

Compare the position of the British High Commission with the influence enjoyed by other Commonwealth Missions and by foreign Embassies.

(c) *Disputes*

We assume disputes between Member nations are contrary to British interests even though we are not involved at first hand. Does the Commonwealth relationship help to prevent disputes coming to a head? Or blunt the sharpest edges if they do? (E.g. has the India/Pakistan quarrel over the years been unaffected by the fact that both are Commonwealth Members?)

(d) *Defence*

Even where there is no formal bilateral treaty the Commonwealth relationship subsumes a British moral obligation to consider, according to the merits and circumstances of a particular case, whether we ought not to go to the aid of a Commonwealth partner who appeals for our help. How far does the host country share this view? Does it cement our bilateral political relations? Is a similar benevolent attitude expected of other Commonwealth countries?

(e) *United Nations*

Does the Commonwealth relationship play any part in matters connected with United Nations in the capitals of Member countries? Does it influence attitudes and behaviour (both official and informal) at the United Nations in New York?

(f) *Aid*

How far is the giving and receipt of aid dependent on or eased by the Commonwealth relationship?

(g) *Technical assistance*

As for aid.

(h) *Trading relationships*

How far is British trade benefited by the Commonwealth Relationship in its widest sense?

(i) *Non-official relationships and the intangibles*

Some of these may be passing through a process of change and dilution though in other cases the intangible links of the Commonwealth have been strengthened during the present decade. How far do these exert a beneficial political and social influence on bilateral relations? To what extent are they likely to survive an otherwise general rundown of the Commonwealth? Non-official Commonwealth and bilateral relationships: how important? Language, Institutions, Law, University, etc. exchanges.

(j) Any other relationships, tendencies and movements towards or against Commonwealth etc.

251 DO 193/79, no 5A

30 Nov 1966

**'The Commonwealth as a British interest': letter from T D O'Leary¹
(Canberra) to R Walker on the view from Australia**

Your letter 2-PLA. 39/41/30 of 9 November to the D.H.C.² asked for our considered opinions on your proposed exercise on 'the Commonwealth as a British interest' as seen from Australia. Our views are set out below.

2. If we are to consider seriously the effect on British interests in Australia of the ending of the Commonwealth connection, we need to recognise that the circumstances in which the connection was ended would be all-important. A sharp repudiation of the Commonwealth by Britain on terms which left no room for a bilateral special relationship between Britain and Australia would do incalculable harm. A falling away of African and other new Commonwealth members, which left the original 'white' Commonwealth of Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada would be accepted with equanimity and, indeed, could in some ways be beneficial to direct relations between Britain and Australia.

3. It is necessary to emphasise at the outset that in the broadest possible sense the Australian understanding of the Commonwealth is of an ANZAC relationship with Britain. Australians are in the vast majority British by origin. They feel and express obvious emotional ties to Britain as 'home'. With New Zealand, Australia has, for reasons of proximity and common origin, the closest possible relationship; Australians regard the New Zealanders as cousins and share with them a sense of family connection with the mother country. Thus for Australia, the only fully meaningful relationship within the Commonwealth is the trilateral one with Britain and New Zealand.

¹ First secretary and defence secretary, UK High Commission, Canberra, 1965–1968.

² See 250.

4. The Australian view of the Commonwealth beyond that cannot in any really significant sense be considered multilateral. At one level, Australia feels some historical link of Empire with Britain's former colonies; at another level Australia maintains a particular interest in certain Commonwealth countries, e.g. Malaysia, but the essential nexus in these relationships does not specifically stem from the Commonwealth connection. It is based rather on factors of geographical propinquity and mutual political or economic interest. In this sense, Australia has a defence interest in Malaysia arising out of their common membership of the Asian-Pacific world; Australia has a similar but less active interest in Hong Kong and the Pacific area. Australia has moreover inherited, along with much else from Britain, a sort of residual historical interest in India. But Australian relations with the non-Commonwealth countries of Indonesia and Japan mean more to her than these connections with the Asian Commonwealth. With Canada and the former white Commonwealth countries of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, Australia still has a certain feeling of kinship. But Australia has virtually no interest in, and enjoys little direct contact with, the Commonwealth countries of Africa and the Caribbean. (See Morgan's letter 2-POL. 14/2 of 18 October to Hughes in your Department.) Australia, and her intimate connection with Britain, existed before the Commonwealth began, and Australia can be said to have grown to full independent nationhood whilst the modern Commonwealth has been evolving.

5. In matters of state policy, Australia is now guided primarily by considerations of national self-interest; one of the major matters of national interest in her eyes is the maintenance of the intimate relationship with Britain; this stems originally from historical ties, but now finds expression in concrete economic and political advantages. Australia also enjoys another sort of special relationship, that with the United States (for more detail of which see below); this has no direct relevance to the Commonwealth as such, though it goes some way towards paralleling Britain's alliance with the United States.

6. Thus, Australia's interest in the Commonwealth is of a piecemeal nature. Nevertheless the Australian Government, and some Australian intellectual leaders, have been prepared to play a useful and active part in multilateral Commonwealth organisations and in some cases (e.g. in Africa South of the Sahara) to develop bilateral relationships with Commonwealth countries in which Australia would probably take no interest at all but for the Commonwealth connection. However, Australia's most important external relationships at present (apart from those with Britain, New Zealand and the U.S.A.) are with countries in Asia, and here the emphasis is on geographical propinquity and mutual political or economic interest, and not on the Commonwealth connection.

7. Many Australians have seen virtue and possibilities in the Commonwealth as a whole in the form of a multi-national and multi-racial institution contributing to world stability (see the final paragraph of our telegram No. 1354 reporting Mr. Holt's statements on his return home after the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting). It was partly in recognition of this ideal that Mr. Holt was so outspoken in his disappointment with the proceedings of the last Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting (see Morgan's letter 2-POL. 138/42/7 of 18 October to you). Mr. Holt's reaction was also activated by a feeling that it was against the unwritten rules of Commonwealth Meetings that a topic which vitally concerned two member countries (Australia and New Zealand) should be virtually excluded from the discussions; in the

talking shop of the Commonwealth Meeting, everyone ought to be given the chance to talk about his own parish; and Australasia's parish is South East Asia and in particular Vietnam. Australia has, since 1942, been going through a process of emerging from her shell and becoming increasingly involved in the area of the world about her; and finding herself having to do so at a time when direct British involvement in her area has declined. Mr. Holt in fact wanted the Commonwealth Prime Ministers to discuss Vietnam, which he described as 'the most important matter in Australian eyes' (our telegram No. 1354), and on this occasion the machinery of Commonwealth consultation proved completely ineffective from the Australian viewpoint. This feeling and this realisation have, with other factors, led Australia to turn increasingly to the United States for protection in an alliance that during the recent visit of President Johnson finally gained full public recognition and expression (see our despatch No. 8). This alliance is now, in defence and politics and almost in economic matters, as important to Australia as the British connection.

8. To illustrate these general points in more detail we shall now attempt to evaluate the Commonwealth connection under the guide posts set out in paragraph 6 of the enclosure to your letter.

(a) *The Commonwealth as a whole*

(i) Australia's general attitude has been covered in paragraphs 3 to 7 above, and is also discussed in paragraph 8(d) below. In sum, Australia pays a certain lip service to obligations put on her by membership of the Commonwealth as a whole, but tends to act essentially on the basis of self-interest modified if at all by the dictates of her trilateral connection with Britain and New Zealand.

(ii) Australia's attitude to any change in the nature of the Commonwealth would depend entirely on the circumstances under which this change took place (see also paragraph 2 above). At one extreme, hypothetically, a total submersion of Britain within an enlarged European Economic Community might well be interpreted as 'desertion' of the Commonwealth and this situation would provoke incalculably bitter reactions in Australia; at the other extreme, the breakup of the Commonwealth as a result of the actions of one particular section of it, say the African countries, would not act against and could possibly even strengthen Australia's direct relations with Britain. The circumstances would be all-important.

(iii) On the matter of Britain's entry into the E.E.C. Australia views this as a bilateral rather than a Commonwealth problem. Australians are very conscious of their dependence on Britain as a market for certain sensitive sectors of production, notably dairy products, sugar and fruits, and the prospect of Britain adopting the common agricultural policy and applying the common external tariff of the Community is not lightly regarded. But opinion here has changed since the time of Mr. Heath's negotiations in Brussels. Australia is trying to work out a new pattern of trade with Japan and S.E. Asia which would make her much less susceptible to the prospect of Britain joining the E.E.C. than she was in 1962. Intelligent Australians realise that this interest demands a prosperous Britain and that, if this can best be achieved by our joining the E.E.C. Britain must draw the necessary conclusions. The Australians are themselves already trying to negotiate trade arrangements with Japan and are hoping for similar arrangements with the United States. The obvious and most valuable bargaining counter which the Australians have is British preferences. After the conclusion

of the Kennedy Round, the U.K./Australia Trade Agreement, or what remains of it, will have to be renegotiated. In this sense the value and strength of Britain's ties with Australia are already being diluted, and Britain's entry into the E.E.C. would only parallel what the Australians themselves are already doing. It would in itself certainly not be regarded as inconsistent with the continuity of a close special relationship between Britain and Australia. Much would, of course, depend on the kind of terms we obtained.

(b) *Representation*

Diplomatic contact between the British High Commission, Canberra, and the Australian authorities is extremely close and friendly.³ In many instances, it is as if one were dealing with another Whitehall department. The outward working expression of this relationship is our unique right to deal directly with the Prime Minister's Department, by-passing other departments through which other High Commissions and Embassies have to work. The Prime Minister's Department, developed under Sir R. Menzies, is perhaps under Mr. Holt slightly less influential; but the direct link with the P.M.D. gives us an obvious and special influence at the centre of Government. So far Mr. Holt has shown no disposition to alter this arrangement.

(c) *Disputes*

Major disputes, between Britain and Australia have, up to now, been rare; although, at least in the trade field, they may in future become more frequent and more acute. Minor difficulties are fairly frequent and are usually toned down either because of Australian consideration for us, or ours for them, helped by the special nature of the Australian/British relationship and the nature of the working arrangements outlined at (b) above. A seriously abrasive issue between Australia and Britain at present is that of restrictions on the entry of Australians into Britain (see paragraph number 1 of the High Commissioner's despatch No. 10 dated 22 November). This is a dispute which arises paradoxically because of the Commonwealth relationship and it would presumably be resolved in a bilateral relationship outside the Commonwealth. The Australians have up to now observed the Commonwealth spirit in respect of any differences that Australia may have with Britain or any other Commonwealth country, but it is impossible to say whether it is the Commonwealth relationship or the bilateral relationship which blunts the sharpest edges.

(d) *Defence*

For historical reasons, Australia and Britain have always expected immediate aid from each other at any time of national crisis. As the former Foreign Secretary (Mr. Stewart) said in his speech to the Australian Institute of International Affairs in Canberra on 30 June 1966: 'Just as Australia and New Zealand came to the help

³ In 1967, Lord Casey (R G Casey, Australian minister for external affairs, 1951–1960 and governor-general of Australia, 1965–1969) wrote to Brown suggesting closer relations would be fostered if senior public officials from Britain visited selected Commonwealth countries on a more regular basis (FCO 49/100, no 6, letter, 10 May 1967). Garner at the Commonwealth Office explained that this was a familiar Australian refrain; the argument had been put many times by Menzies. He suggested Australia's anxiety reflected to an extent a sense of isolation deriving from geography. UK ministers and officials were frequent visitors to the US and often made stop-overs in Canada, with the result Canada had many more visits than Australia. It was not easy for senior officials to get away for the two or more weeks required for an Australian visit, and there was the further problem that, unlike the Australian government, the UK government did not pay passages for wives (*ibid*, minute, 12 June 1967).

of Great Britain in two world wars, it is unthinkable that if Australia and New Zealand were the victims of aggression Great Britain would not similarly come to their assistance. This is not a question of treaties or legal obligations. It is unthinkable that the British Government or the British people would act otherwise.' But this is a bilateral relationship, and Australia would not necessarily extend such assistance to other Commonwealth countries. In reverse, in Vietnam, Australia sees it as in her direct national interest to commit troops, but they are fighting for the first time without British troops beside them. Australia provided troops to assist Britain in putting down the Communist insurrection in Malaya prior to independence but only after considerable delay did Australia finally commit troops to fight Indonesian intruders in Eastern Malaysia. Without the bilateral connection with Britain, it is arguable that Australia may have considered it more in her interest to be friendly to Indonesia in preference to Malaysia, even though Australia had already begun to have a working relationship with Malaysia. In this sense confrontation provided a rather searching test of Australian national interest, in which the balance of the bilateral relationship with Britain finally tipped against her desire for peaceful relations with her Asian neighbour, Indonesia.

(e) *United Nations*

We feel this is best answered by the U.K. Mission in New York.

(f) and (g) *Aid and technical assistance*

The bulk (over two-thirds) of Australian aid and technical assistance goes to Papua and New Guinea. Of the remainder, one third is given under the auspices of the Colombo Plan from which a number of Commonwealth as well as non-Commonwealth countries have benefited. Australian aid under the plan goes predominantly to India, which last year also received a considerable amount of aid in the form of emergency food supplies. Australia also contributes to a number of aid schemes, mainly in South East Asia (e.g. through SEATO, the Indus Water Scheme, and the Asian Development Bank) and further contributes to international aid through the United Nations organisations. But apart from Papua and New Guinea the major preoccupation in all her aid and development is assistance to Asia and the resultant reputation of Australia in Asia. South East Asia is a natural outlet for Australia's exports and therefore the economic strengths and weaknesses of the area are of considerable concern. In short, Australia's policies in regard to aid and technical assistance are determined more by geographical propinquity than by Commonwealth membership.

(h) *Trading relationships*

The trade and economic relations of Commonwealth countries with each other are not so much based on Commonwealth ties as on self-interest and reciprocity. The Commonwealth countries do not adopt a common line in G.A.T.T. or in U.N.C.T.A.D. on economic issues, any more than they adopt a common line in the U.N. on political issues. Self-interest, and not always an enlightened self-interest, is the dominant factor in determining economic and trade policies.

About 22% of Australia's total external trade is with Britain and about 17% is with other Commonwealth countries. Some of this trade is conducted within the framework of bilateral trade agreements; Australia has such agreements with Britain, Canada, New Zealand, mainland Malaysia, and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland—an agreement which since December 1963 has applied on a

provisional basis to each of the three countries Southern Rhodesia, Zambia and Malawi. Generally the basis of these agreements is a reciprocal arrangement for tariff preferences, although the U.K./Australia Trade Agreement has wider aspects.

Australia has a British Preferential Tariff which applies to Britain, Canada, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland, Papua and New Guinea. It also applies for certain goods to specified Commonwealth countries. Almost all Australia's exports to Britain enter duty free, but about one-half share free entry with goods from all sources, the other half enjoying preference. About two-thirds of our exports to Australia enter duty free, and we enjoy preferences on more than three-quarters of the total. Australia's export trade to Britain is important, not only because of its volume, but because for a number of sensitive items it is overwhelmingly more important than other markets and is indeed, almost the only market.

The economic and trade benefits to Britain—and indeed to Australia—of the Commonwealth link between the two are:

- (a) the reciprocal tariff preferences
- (b) prior consultation on trade matters
- (c) the growth of shipping, insurance investment and other commercial links.

Of these, the value of tariff preference is being steadily eroded by Australian protective duties, and this process is likely to continue. Prior consultation takes place in a limited field, and it cannot be expected to operate over the whole range of trade policies, e.g. Australian trade negotiations with the Japanese within the G.A.T.T. negotiations.

The value of (c) is not constant, and is likely to diminish as trade patterns change in the normal course of events, regardless of what happens to the formal Commonwealth link.

British investment flows into Australia because it provides a good, rewarding and politically stable market. This private capital was invested for financial and commercial reasons, and not because Australia is within the Commonwealth. The fact that Australia is within the Sterling Area has facilitated the investment. The recent programme of voluntary restraint⁴ on British investment in Australia gave rise to considerable comment, much of it ill-informed. But whatever the reasons given by Australians for disagreeing with the programme, the weakening of the Commonwealth link was not one of them. It is true that Australian Ministers believed that the Sterling Area was endangered when it was first proposed in London that the investment restraints should be compulsory. (It should not be forgotten in this connection that Australia is the largest overseas holder of sterling.)

The Commonwealth Sugar Agreement provides one example of something of great value to Australia arising from the Commonwealth, which Australia would not wish to see ended.

Australia's trade relations with the Commonwealth other than Britain are dominated by her relations with New Zealand. This relationship is conditioned more by geography than anything else. Australian exports to New Zealand are about four times the value of Australian imports from that country. The two countries have signed a Free Trade Area Agreement covering a limited list of commodities.

⁴ See 416, note 2, and 418.

There are other economic links between Australia and the Commonwealth, e.g. the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux, the Commonwealth Air Transport Council, the Commonwealth Economic Committee, the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council, the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board, and others. Some perform valuable functions, for example, the Commonwealth Economic Consultative Council meets each year at Financial Secretary level before the meetings of the I.M.F. and also has meetings at Trade Minister level.

All in all, the economic and trade links with the Commonwealth are largely based on bargaining and reciprocal arrangements, with little evidence of any of the intangible ties of Commonwealth.

(i) *Non-official relationships and the intangibles*

The British connection is basic to Australia (about 85% of Australians derive originally from the British Isles; while almost one Australian in ten has migrated to Australia from Britain since the Second World War). Australia is completely impregnated with Britishry—Australia's way of life, law, language, institutions, the atmosphere of its society, in fact almost everything Australian has reflections and overtones of Britain. (See the High Commissioner's Despatch No. 8.) There are certainly overtones of Americanism and Antipodean quirks—but the latter at least are really only variations on the British theme. The effect on these intangibles of the disintegration of the Commonwealth would depend, as stated above in paragraph 2, essentially on the circumstances. The institutionalising of any break-up will obviously raise many difficulties and integrated problems, concerning for example nationality and citizenship, the Monarchy, the law, etc., and would each need to be the subject of a separate study.

9. To sum up, for Australia to part from Britain would be for her a major catastrophe; for the Commonwealth as it is today to pass away or to be transformed would cause difficulties, but these would be supportable provided a close connection with Britain and New Zealand remained.

252 DO 193/79, no 7

1 Dec 1966

'The Commonwealth as a British interest: Canada and the Commonwealth': letter from E J Emery¹ (Ottawa) to R Walker. *Annex*

Would you please refer to your letter of 9 November on the planning exercise on 'The Commonwealth as a British Interest'?²

2. I enclose a memorandum about Canadian views on the Commonwealth. In sum, you will see that our view is that Canada has a positive and constructive attitude to the Commonwealth; the concept of the new, multi-racial, Commonwealth plays a significant part in Canada's external policies; and continuing association with and interest in the Commonwealth on the part of Britain and Canada are important and generally beneficial factors in British-Canadian relations.

¹ Eleanor Jane Emery, Dominions Office from 1941, CRO from 1948; served in New Delhi, 1952–1955, and Pretoria/Cape Town, 1958–1962; head of South Asia Dept, CRO, 1962–1964; counsellor, UK High Commission, Ottawa, 1964–1968; head of Pacific and Indian Ocean Dept (later Pacific Dependent Territories Dept), FCO, 1969–1973; high commissioner, Botswana, 1973–1977.

² See 250.

Annex to 252

General

The part played by Commonwealth considerations in Canadian Foreign Policy was described in the High Commissioner's despatch No. 7 of 3 May, 1965, especially in paragraphs 13–15.

2. While the Commonwealth connexion is not the only—or even the most important—factor in Canadian policy there can be no doubt that the present Canadian Government attach a good deal of importance to it, both in word and deed. Not all Canadian Governments have been so forthcoming. Mr. Mackenzie King³ was nervous of any move towards closer Commonwealth association. In those days and even during the days when Mr. Diefenbaker⁴ was Prime Minister, the progressive Conservatives were the 'Commonwealth' party. But since the return to power of the Liberals in 1963 there can be no doubt about the attachment of Mr. Pearson and his Government to the Commonwealth idea. Mr. Pearson himself has often publicly expressed his views on the Commonwealth, a recent occasion being his speech to the Royal Commonwealth Society in Montreal in May, 1966. In the course of this address Mr. Pearson said 'the greatest value of the new Commonwealth is [that it is] a multi-racial association at a time when the world is crying out for that kind of association'. It is of interest that in confidential discussion with President Kaunda of Zambia in Ottawa the other day, Mr. Pearson appealed to the President not to make difficulties over selective mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia because that proposal had been the fruit of the recent Prime Ministers' Conference and, other considerations apart, was worth pursuing for that reason. This belief in the value of the multi-racial Commonwealth is reinforced by the consideration that in the Commonwealth Canada can play a leading rôle, and can exert a greater influence, than in such larger fora as the United Nations; it gives her a more prominent place on the world stage than her position in isolation might have permitted.

3. It should, however, also be pointed out that to many Canadian 'men in the street' the concept of Commonwealth has little meaning. An interesting assessment of the average Canadian's thinking about the Commonwealth is contained in the record of a discussion at a meeting of the Heads of Outposts held in Ottawa in January, 1966. I enclose a copy of this.⁵ There are also those Canadians, especially in the West, with rather old-fashioned 'imperial' ideas about the Commonwealth and for them it means mainly the association with Britain. Understanding of the concept of the multi-racial 'new' Commonwealth as a bridge between races and between 'haves' and 'have-nots' is thus more general in intellectual and official circles than elsewhere. Public opinion is comparatively uneducated on the subject. Nevertheless the new Commonwealth is an important element in Canadian external policies as is illustrated below.

4. It is difficult, if not impossible, to assess the part which Commonwealth membership plays in the relations between Britain and Canada. So many other factors are involved: history; language; common ethnic origins; traditions and institutions; common interests as western industrialized nations; common membership of N.A.T.O.; the ties of both Britain and Canada with United States. It can, however, be said that

³ W L Mackenzie King, prime minister of Canada, 1921–1926, 1926–1930, 1935–1948.

⁴ J Diefenbaker, prime minister of Canada, 1957–1963.

⁵ Not printed.

while the ties between Britain and Canada would certainly survive the disappearance of the Commonwealth, they are substantially re-inforced by the fact that Britain and Canada are the two leading members of the Commonwealth.

5. Canada's relations with members of the Commonwealth other than Britain vary. With some Commonwealth members, notably those of the Caribbean, Canada has close links in such fields as commerce, banking and tourism: some of these are of longstanding. Although with the majority of the African members Canada had hardly any ties at all until they became independent, in recent years the Canadian Government have done much to foster their links with the new members of the Commonwealth. They have opened missions in almost every Commonwealth country (19 at present, though some of these are non-resident). The greater part of Canadian aid is channelled to Commonwealth countries, as is all Canadian military assistance. Although the total volume of Canadian aid is small (at present about .45% of G.A.P.), it would probably be smaller still without the Commonwealth connexion which has stimulated the Canadians to an appreciation of the need to give aid; they also find it administratively easier to give aid where the local constitutions are on a familiar pattern and where they are represented. There is of course a clear element of self-interest in some of the Canadian efforts—most of their aid, for example, is 'tied', and is probably given partly in the hope of stimulating Canadian exports.

6. Partly in return for these efforts but also because of her international reputation generally Canada enjoys a unique position in the Commonwealth. A prosperous, middle power, Canada (unlike Britain) has no imperialist past to inhibit her relations with the new Commonwealth countries. She sees herself therefore, and the African countries in particular see her, as having a leading rôle to play in Commonwealth affairs. The present Canadian Government are willing to make the most of this as was shown by the part the Canadian delegations played at the Lagos and last London Prime Ministers' Meetings on Rhodesia. But we may sometimes have to pay a price for Canada's admittedly valuable mediating rôle in that she will at times favour policies which go against our interests.

7. It would of course be a mistake to exaggerate the Canadian influence or Canadian interest in the Commonwealth. This influence and this interest are for the most part of fairly recent growth; they are not grounded on important considerations of trade or self-interest. If the Commonwealth broke up or if, for example, the African states walked out of it, most Canadians would not shed too many tears. Leaving aside relations with Britain, the Commonwealth connexion is for Canada, inevitably, less significant materially than her close links with the United States. Again, the Canadian Government has been for many years one of the most loyal supporters of the United Nations. In a conflict between Commonwealth interest and United Nations interest it is doubtful if Canada would give precedence to the Commonwealth. An example of this occurred when the question of a peacekeeping force for Cyprus was under discussion in 1964: the notion of the Commonwealth force did not attract the Canadians and the association of any peacekeeping force with the United Nations was one of the conditions which Mr. Pearson laid down for Canadian participation.

8. It is difficult to estimate the effect on Canadian attitudes to the Commonwealth of her special relations with France, and the large French-Canadian element in her population. There is undoubtedly a tendency among French-Canadians to think of the Commonwealth as very much a 'British' Commonwealth and it is possible that in the past this consideration has limited Canadian interest in the Commonwealth.

But changes in the membership of the Commonwealth in recent years and the course of events, particularly since Rhodesia's I.D.I., have made it so obvious that the Commonwealth is no longer a purely British institution that this consideration applies less strongly than formerly. Nevertheless, in determining her policies Canada has increasingly required to take account of possible repercussions in French Canada. Thus there has, in recent years, been a considerable increase (though the total is still small) of Canadian aid to French-speaking Africa, part of the motive of which has been to 'balance' the aid given to (English-speaking) Commonwealth countries. Some interest has also been shown here in proposed links between French-speaking countries (e.g. the ideas propounded by the President of Senegal). But these manifestations do little, if anything, to weaken Canada's Commonwealth links.

9. Canada has played her part in fostering and assisting the institutions of the Commonwealth, e.g. Canada was host at the Third Commonwealth Education Conference and a Canadian is the first Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

10. The following are our comments on the points raised in paragraph 6 of the enclosure to Commonwealth Office letter 2-PLA 39/41/30 of 9 November.

(a) *The Commonwealth as a whole*

See above. A reduced British effort in the Commonwealth would certainly influence the attitude of the Canadian Government. As Mr. Pearson said, in his Montreal speech quoted above, 'we should never forget, however, as the Commonwealth changes, that Great Britain still remains the very centre and the heart of the association. That is natural and that is right. It seems to me the Commonwealth would be quite impossible without Great Britain maintaining this place. There is no one else who could possibly take it'. Nevertheless, provided Britain maintained enough interest to give continued impetus to the idea and practical working of the Commonwealth association, it might well be that Canada would find it suited her interests and foreign policy as a whole, to expand her rôle as ours contracted.

In many ways the policies of Britain and Canada are complementary. The Canadians, for example, have no 'East of Suez' rôle, and their rôle in Africa in many ways complements our own, e.g. they were able to take on the training of Tanzanian military forces at a time when this would have been politically impossible for Britain. A diminished political effort by Britain might produce different results in different parts of the world. In some areas, e.g. the Caribbean, Canada might be prepared to do more as we do less. (Mr. Pearson in fact in the same speech said Canadians should be proud to fill this gap in the material development of the West Indies.) In other parts of the world Canada might think that a diminution of British activity might make her own not worthwhile.

The present Canadian Government's public position is that they see no conflict between British membership of the E.E.C. and the Commonwealth. They realize however, that if Britain joined the Common Market the economic links between Britain and Canada would change over a period of time, and that British membership might contribute to a slackening of the economic ties which is already evident.

(b) *Representation*

The British High Commission in Ottawa certainly enjoys an influence far greater than that of any other Commonwealth mission. This is, of course, inevitable given the strength of ties, historical, political, economic and cultural between Canada and

Britain. We are able to provide the Canadians with information which is of use to them and which supplements their own sources in a way no other Commonwealth mission can: this is particularly true of African affairs. Among foreign embassies, the American Embassy, of course, enjoys a special position (although a large part of Canadian–U.S. relations is conducted through other channels); and so, to a lesser degree, does the French Embassy.

It is, of course, true that the British High Commission might still retain much of its special position even if Commonwealth links were weakened. Here something would depend on the circumstances. If, for example, we continued to supply information which was valuable to the Canadians on topics of which they were interested this would continue to enhance our favourable position.

(c) *Disputes*

This hardly applies to relations between Canada and other members of the Commonwealth. Canada certainly regards the Commonwealth as a suitable forum in which to settle disputes (she has, for example, been active in mediating between Britain and African Commonwealth countries on Rhodesia).

The Department of External Affairs tend to be shy of proposals for ‘old’ Commonwealth ‘ganging up’ to intervene in disputes between ‘new’ Commonwealth countries; they might *not* see the same difficulties over ‘mixed’ Commonwealth good offices were the occasion to arise. The Canadian Government might also sometimes consider the United Nations a more suitable place to settle disputes than the Commonwealth.

(d) *Defence*

There are very close links between Britain and Canada in the defence field. These, however, arise more through the two countries’ membership of N.A.T.O. and from the historic links between Britain and Canada than from the Commonwealth connexion. These links could well continue even if there were a relaxing of Commonwealth ties. Canadian links with other Commonwealth countries are less strong in this field, though recently the Canadians have played a useful rôle in training the armed forces of some other Commonwealth countries—notably Tanzania. As regards the question of aiding a Commonwealth partner who appeals for help, the Canadians would expect such an appeal—and do their best to respond favourably to it provided the request came clearly from the country to be assisted. If the country to be assisted were Canada, they would depend on America rather than on a member of the Commonwealth.

(e) *United Nations*

Here the Commonwealth relationship is not particularly significant but Canada’s special position in the Commonwealth (see paragraph 6 above) perhaps on occasion makes a contribution.

(f) and (g) *Aid and technical assistance*

In the current fiscal year Canadian aid allocations for bilateral grants and technical assistance, development loans and food aid totalled \$189 m. Total official aid is running at around .45% of national income.

Some 65% of Canada’s bilateral aid, which accounts for over 70% of Canada’s total effort, including grants, technical assistance, loans and food aid, goes to Commonwealth countries.

In the development of her aid programmes, Canada has been anxious to co-ordinate her aid with other donors. Programmes such as the Colombo Plan (which started on an entirely Commonwealth basis) and the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAAP) have been most welcome to Canada in this context. More recently, the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat, notably their co-ordination of the provision of training for Rhodesian Africans, has been of use to the External Aid Office and has encouraged them to adopt more positive policies.

Canada also looks to such organizations as the United Nations and O.E.C.D. for assistance and guidance in developing her aid programmes. However, the Commonwealth relationship, both with other donors and with recipient countries, should continue to facilitate consultation and the joint study of aid problems: this, together with the institutional assistance of the Commonwealth bodies mentioned above, and e.g. the Common-Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, should continue to be of considerable importance to Canada in the formulation of her aid policies.

(h) *Trading relationships*

It is not easy to answer shortly the question how far British trade is benefited by the Commonwealth relationship with Canada in its widest sense. The prime factor has been the existence of substantial tariff preferences accorded by each country to the other which must have encouraged British exports to Canada and imports from Canada to have been at higher levels than if m.f.n. rules had applied. However, the Canadians have increased the rigour of their protective régime since the Ottawa Agreements, notably taking the initiative in 1947 for the Exchange of Letters which put British Preference in Canada on a non-contractual basis, while her uniquely restrictive anti-dumping régime has been intensified since 1958. Successive rounds of tariff negotiations in the G.A.T.T. and the creation of regional trading arrangements have contributed to the reduction of effective margins of preference in Anglo-Canadian trade over the past two decades.

In 1958, the Fleming/Eccles Exchange of Letters reaffirmed the United Kingdom's right to be consulted before reductions in important margins of preference in Canada were considered. The Canadians have, with some exceptions of omission or delay, been ready to consult and to take some account of views expressed by the United Kingdom in particular cases. However, this readiness, while it reflects in point the Commonwealth relationship, owes something to the fact that Canada has been pressed in recent years to do what she could to remedy the serious imbalance of Anglo-Canadian trade. While she has appreciated that if too great an erosion of British preferences resulted, or if the great imbalance of trade remained, pressure would mount in Britain for the reduction or removal of the substantial preferences which Canadian goods still enjoy, she has up to now been unwilling to modify her anti-dumping legislation, even though this legislation has helped to tilt the balance in the advantage of preferences to the two countries in Canada's favour. The growth of the Canadian protective system has, moreover, obliged a wide cross-section of British firms to set up subsidiaries in Canada in order to retain a hold in the market. These include some of the British consumer goods industries which might have benefited most from the maintenance of import demand for British products as a result of the tastes of immigrants from Britain. While it would be difficult to assess, it is a relevant factor that, at least until recent years when British industry became more competitive even in European markets, our preferences in Canada, like those in

other Commonwealth markets, may have allowed the continuance of inefficiencies in particular British industries and firms, whereas the absence of relatively sheltered markets might have exposed them to healthy competition.

We should realise that Canada will, however, continue to give her principal attention to the problems of her trading relations with the U.S.A. which presents at once her largest market and the greatest threat of competition for Canadian secondary industry. Moreover, the general assumption in Canada is that Britain will within measurable time become a member of the E.E.C.; Canadians are, therefore, now probably more concerned with problems of trade with Europe as a whole than with their preferences in the British market which are viewed as a wasting asset, although valuable so long as they last. It is clear that Canada is giving a great deal of thought to her future trading relationships with Europe and the U.S.A. in the context of the Kennedy Round.

(i) *Non-official relationships and the intangibles*

The non-official links between Britain and Canada are multifarious; they are almost wholly beneficial. Many of the non-official links in the professions and the Universities, for example, are mainly bilateral, although some operate within a Commonwealth framework. There has perhaps been in recent years a weakening of some of the non-official links; this is partly because with the growth of Canada and the emergency of a Canadian identity there is less dependence on British institutions and traditions; partly that with the growing awareness of '*le fait français*' in Canadian life there is a desire not to stress the British links too much; partly the growing American influence in so many aspects of Canadian life. But both the non-official links and the factors tending to modify them are not primarily Commonwealth ones, and there is nothing to indicate that a weakening of Commonwealth ties would substantially affect them.

(j) *Other relationships*

Britain is still the largest single source of immigrants to Canada—almost 1/3rd of the total in 1965. This is still a fundamental bond between the two countries but when, as happens too frequently, a recent immigrant speaks ill of Britain he may have a bad influence on Anglo-Canadian relations.

253 DO 193/79, no 11

5 Dec 1966

[The Commonwealth as a British interest]: letter from P J S Moon¹
(New York) to R Walker on the view from the UN

You sent me a copy of your letter 2/PLA.39/41/30 of 9 November² to Deputy High Commissioners in Commonwealth posts about the preparation of a paper dealing with the Commonwealth as a British interest and invited my comments. The middle of the Assembly Session is not the best moment for quiet reflection, but I hope the

¹ Private secretary to secretary of state for Commonwealth relations, 1963–1965; first secretary, UK Mission to UN, New York, 1965–1969; FCO, 1969–1970; private secretary to prime minister, 1970–1972.

² See 250.

following remarks on the Commonwealth relationship as seen in New York may be of some help.

2. For the reasons explained in Youde's³ letter 22739/10/66 of 21 January to Falle in U.N. (Political) Department at the Foreign Office, the United Nations is not at present favourable ground for Commonwealth co-operation. On the other hand, this is not to say that the existence of the Commonwealth link makes no difference at all to relations between delegations. This letter considers first, therefore, what if any difference it does make, and, secondly, what would be the loss involved in the disappearance of that difference, if it does exist, through the disappearance of the Commonwealth.

3. It hardly needs to be said that as between the 'old' Commonwealth countries, it is not the formal existence of the Commonwealth which governs our close mutual relations and thus its disappearance would not substantially affect these relations. This is as true in New York as no doubt in virtually all other fields of diplomatic activity (though on racial and colonial issues we might well find that Canada for instance would be less ready to go along with us). It is not however possible to say the same with equal confidence with regard to the other Commonwealth countries, notwithstanding that in some cases at the present time, and even with the Commonwealth in being, relations are very strained and at a low level. In the first place our own policies and more generally our attitude towards Commonwealth delegations, even the black sheep, are still strongly influenced by the fact of the existence of the Commonwealth link. This moreover is quite apart from such a special case as Rhodesia which is specifically being treated as a Commonwealth problem. Thus one obvious example is the question of elections, where we tend to give preference to a Commonwealth candidate even where, on merit, a candidate of another, and even sometimes more friendly country, has a stronger claim. Again, when looking for co-sponsors or partners in some U.N. enterprise from among other geographical groups, we automatically tend to think of Commonwealth countries, for example, Nigeria, Uganda or Kenya from Africa, India, Ceylon or Malaysia from Asia, or the Jamaicans or Malta as representative of the small delegations. This is the more significant in that, in present circumstances, other non-Commonwealth delegations might often be likely to be at least equally receptive to approaches from us. We also tend to consult more, both formally and informally; and generally to have a closer personal contact with Commonwealth colleagues among, for example, the Afro-Asians than with others in that group. This constant exchange of views and ideas at all levels, both enables us to know more of what the other groups, to which our Commonwealth colleagues belong, are thinking and must also help to make known our position around those groups. To some extent this specially close contact can be explained by the link of common language, but this is not I think entirely the answer, particularly bearing in mind that most delegates, and certainly most members of Permanent Missions at the United Nations, have a good command of English, the only exceptions being some French Africans and a few Latin Americans.

4. To what extent the Commonwealth link *per se* tends to bring together other Commonwealth delegations among themselves is more difficult to say. In many cases it is almost impossible to disentangle the Commonwealth factor from other, and in many cases stronger influences, e.g. political identity of views on major racial and

³ E Youde, counsellor and head of Chancery, UK Mission to UN, New York, from 1965.

colonial issues among Commonwealth Africans and links of history and common heritage, as, for example, between India and Pakistan whose delegations, despite Kashmir, remain for the most part on fairly good personal terms in New York. None the less, I would certainly not write off the influence of the Commonwealth link as such. In particular, though this must be a wasting asset, it is a tradition in which several heads of Commonwealth Missions have been brought up and I do not believe they are by any means entirely impervious to it. Examples are Arkhurst of Ghana, Adebo of Nigeria, Richardson of Jamaica and Jayaratne of Ceylon. Moreover, even among some of the younger and as yet more junior Commonwealth diplomats here, one senses a certain self-satisfaction about belonging to the Commonwealth, as a body, which outsiders find difficult to understand and yet often admire and which, while remaining intangible, opens possibilities of contacts and sources of information and advice which otherwise might not be there.

5. My conclusion, therefore, would be that should the Commonwealth cease to exist, there would be some falling off in contacts between some Commonwealth delegations here. This would probably not be a rapid process and, as I have already mentioned, the old Commonwealth, as among themselves at least, would be an exception to it. Even without the formal Commonwealth link, there would still remain factors tending towards close relations between Commonwealth delegations, ease of communication through a common language above all. But apart from that, assuming that trade and aid as between the one-time Commonwealth countries remained important, and assuming also that many of the political problems with which we deal, particularly the colonial problems, continue to be of close concern to many Commonwealth countries, it would seem likely that there would still be a great deal of business to be conducted between Commonwealth delegations. This in itself would contribute to the maintenance of relations, though possibly in some cases rather bad relations. In the longer term, however, it would seem almost inevitable that there would be a steady growing apart. No doubt too much should not be made of individual examples, but it is perhaps worth while remarking that our contacts with the delegations of, for example, Burma and the Sudan are very limited indeed.

6. One further question which may pose itself is whether the disappearance of the Commonwealth would have any direct effect for good or ill on the United Nations itself. As the ending of what many have looked upon as a great multi-racial endeavour and one which, if only so far to a very limited extent, has provided at least a stepping-stone between the geographical groups in the U.N. any such effect could only be adverse. But though the loss of the Commonwealth would, I think, be mourned at the U.N. it would be unlikely to have any immediately practical impact. Indeed, as explained in Youde's letter referred to above, in purely practical terms, so far as the U.N. is concerned, the Commonwealth has already almost ceased to exist; a main reason for this has been the inevitably strong pulls of other geographical groupings on individual Commonwealth members. At the same time it may be remarked that individual Commonwealth countries are tending to play an increasingly important role in the U.N. Thus, paradoxically, while the Commonwealth seat in the Security Council has disappeared, we now have no fewer than three Commonwealth non-permanent members in the Council, and shall again next year. Indeed, in a matter of two years nearly a third of the Commonwealth membership will have sat in the Security Council: U.K., Malaysia, Nigeria, Uganda, New Zealand, Canada and India with, in addition, Pakistan and Kenya in the running.

7. Finally it should perhaps be added that this letter is being written at a moment when, from our point of view, at the United Nations Commonwealth relations are at a particularly low ebb. The reasons for this are virtually entirely the Rhodesian problem and the problems of southern Africa generally. If we once arrive at a situation in which these problems no longer are a barrier between us and the majority of the Commonwealth, the whole situation could change considerably. The Commonwealth at the United Nations might then become what we have always hoped for it—a real force in its own right as a bloc of countries spanning the geographical groupings and supporting and working for the principles of the United Nations, though we might still often find ourselves in disagreement over what these principles and objects really were. As such it could be of major influence and importance, and, as an important member of the group, our own position would be immensely strengthened. In assessing therefore the Commonwealth as a British interest, at least so far as the U.N. is concerned, we should not lose sight of this future potential, even if to-day it may seem rather distant.

8. I have discussed this with Lord Caradon who agrees with what I have said. His comment is that my observations are based on the possibility of a gradual dissolution of the Commonwealth. It is also necessary to consider what would happen if the Commonwealth were suddenly blown sky high by an explosion over Rhodesia and southern Africa. In that event resentment against the United Kingdom would be strongest amongst African and Asian Commonwealth countries. They would think and speak in terms of betrayal, and in any consequent racial conflict they might well become our most bitter opponents.

254 FCO 49/211, no 1

9 Dec 1966

**'An impression of the Commonwealth conference': despatch from
M MacDonald (Nairobi) to Mr Bowden on the meeting of
Commonwealth prime ministers at London in September 1966**

It may be helpful if I write some reflections on the recent Commonwealth Conference.¹ I attended my first such gathering in 1930—in the now seemingly almost antedeluvian days when their title was still 'Imperial', not yet 'Commonwealth'—and in one capacity or another I have been present at a considerable number of them scattered through the subsequent decades. Comparisons between all these variegated conclaves are interesting. I understand that some almost equally experienced and certainly equally sagacious observers as myself judged that this latest one was among the worst of its kind. I beg to differ from that view; in my opinion it was one of the most promising of them all from the point of view of the possible emergence of a truly multi-racial Commonwealth which could exert significant, and sometimes decisive, influence for the good in certain difficult problems affecting the future of the now sorely troubled human race. Having said that, I should add in qualification that I agree that this conference was pregnant not only with potential good, but also with seeds of evil; for certain of its features were unfortunate, and could do much harm if they are allowed to persist. So the promise contained in the recent meeting was not decisive, but only

¹ At London in Sept 1966 (see 217, note 4).

tentative; it is too early to say whether the Commonwealth's progress over the next several crucial years will be an advance forwards or a sliding backwards. If we in Britain continue to be tolerant and understanding with some of our younger partners, we can do much to guide it in the former direction.

2. If I comprehend correctly some of the recent conference's critics, the main reason why they complain of it is one of the reasons why I, contrarily, praise it. They strongly objected to the often bitter denunciations of the British Government's policy regarding Rhodesia which several African and Caribbean representatives uttered—and they are of course right in saying that certain of those attacks on the Government in general and the Prime Minister in particular went beyond normal propriety. Quite often these onslaughts were not only positively unjust, but also grossly rude, and even actionably libellous. If the British representative at the conference table—the Prime Minister himself—had become impatient of such oratorical licence, and had answered back with equal vehemence (as he could easily have done) and so risked turning the discussion into a mutual slanging match, the conference would of course have taken a disastrous turn. But he did no such thing; he remained attentive, forbearing and good humoured. Once or twice he interjected some sentences of firm yet not unfriendly protest, and more often he interrupted a speaker's passage of vicious abuse to make an apt, light-hearted jest. On each of those occasions his interventions were telling. But otherwise he remained quietly patient, permitting his Commonwealth colleagues to exhaust their blowing-off of steam. His apparently almost limitless tolerance saved the conference, and helped decisively to turn it into a notable success; for his attitude not only earned the respect of the other representatives round the table, but also convinced the newer members of something which they had not fully believed before—that the Commonwealth is an association of peoples of various races who, despite their immense differences of colour, creed, character, political sophistication, etc., are all treated as sovereign equals. And they realised that this spirit of equalitarian fraternity allowed exchanges of opinion to be completely frank, with the result that any problem could be so thoroughly and candidly exposed that everyone would fully understand everybody else's point of view, and that therefore the whole group could gain a clear knowledge of exactly how much common ground and how much disagreement existed between them on any given issue. The mood of the conference then began to change. Feeling that they had been treated by the British chairman with generous fairness, most of the delegates' honour was satisfied, and they became ready to be, themselves, juster in return. They responded to behind-the-scenes appeals to make the discussions constructive, not destructive. It was not surprising that India and some of the more responsible of the newer delegations—like those from Kenya, Uganda and Singapore—exerted their energies in that direction; but it was reassuring that this temper spread until it eventually infected such representatives as those from Sierra Leone and Guyana. The fact that they were persuaded to support a considerable measure of compromise agreement on the most obstinately controversial, emotion-rousing problem of Rhodesia in the conference's final statement of policy published in its communiqué was remarkable proof of the success of the technique of unusually frank discussion adopted round the table. Such creatively candid exchanges can rarely take place without giving damaging offence in other international gatherings such as those at the United Nations.

3. I must comment on another circumstance which, however embarrassing it may be to us Britons, helped to stimulate the fresh faith which many of the Asian,

African and other members acquired at Marlborough House in the positive value of the Commonwealth. During the debates on Rhodesia the British voice was constantly in a minority, since a majority of those present were more or less critical of certain of our actions; and as a result Her Majesty's Government's policy was to some extent influenced. The notion held in some quarters that Britain would always dominate these conference arguments, and would in effect dictate policy to her junior partners in the Commonwealth—somewhat as she used to direct it when they were still British colonies—was therefore dispelled. This considerably impressed, as well as surprised, a number of the newer delegations, who had not really appreciated the sincere intention to deal together as equals which marks the Commonwealth relationship. The fact that Her Majesty's Government allowed its policy to be modified in some degree by the views expressed round the table was deeply appreciated. Nor did this weaken their respect for Britain; on the contrary, it sustained the regard in which Britain is held as by far the most important member of the Commonwealth. For although many of the recent new members were pleased by the fact of equality of status which was demonstrated to exist between all the partners, they undoubtedly recognise (and will now accept more readily) that Britain is *primus inter pares* in this international brotherhood, and that it is mostly Britain's importance and prestige in the world which lend the Commonwealth a significant force.

4. The conference impressed me for another reason. I have not attended any of these comprehensive Commonwealth gatherings for several years, and when I did last listen to the debates at such a meeting the number of Governments represented was little more than a dozen. This September the figure had risen to 22—excluding Tanzania, which did not attend—and before the conference started I was inclined to suppose that the company was now too large for really fruitful talks. I thought it had become over-crowded, and that as a consequence its discussions would lose their informality and intimacy, assuming more the character of a semi-public meeting where speakers were inclined to make set speeches to an audience, rather than of a family group engaging in give-and-take exchanges of opinions. I soon learned that I was wrong; for in spite of the fact that many of the delegates' initial statements were carefully prepared, rather long-winded orations, the touch of confidential intimacy was always present. Moreover, the larger number of representatives of diverse national peoples gathered together added an extra quality—indeed, extra dimensions—to the group, which had not marked the earlier, smaller conferences which I used to attend. The assembly had become much more comprehensively representative of the many different branches of the human family; and the white, brown, black, yellow, off-white and other variously coloured faces sitting side by side made it a microcosm of the world community. This caused their exchanges of opinions to be far more valuable than had been previous discussions in more limited conferences. Incidentally, the fact that all the talk was conducted in English added to the constructive usefulness of those exchanges; and if general harmony among these Commonwealth Governments can be maintained, this should help to make the influence of its collective English-speaking peoples more powerful than hitherto in certain world affairs. The fact is that because of their frankness, friendliness and coherence such deliberations among members of the Commonwealth can be more constructively fruitful than debates in the United Nations or any other international organisation.

5. It was helpful that in the intense debate about Rhodesia the main division of opinion was not along racial lines. The British Government was generally supported not only by Canada, Australia and New Zealand, but also by Malaysia, Malawi, Gambia (to a considerable extent) and Malta, and it was by no means wholly opposed (at least in private) by some other Asian and African representatives; whilst the majority African point of view gained some assistance from Canada as well as from most of the Asian and Caribbean countries. This further strengthened the sense of true inter-racial—or non-racial—fraternity among all the representatives present.

6. Before pursuing these thoughts further let me turn to some less attractive features of the conference. Perhaps the most unfortunate was the emergence during the Rhodesian discussions of an Afro-Asian 'caucus' which held lengthy meetings outside the conference room, and which on several occasions caused inconsiderate postponements at short notice of the conference meetings proper. It must be admitted that in some ways the existence of the caucus turned out to be useful, for it enabled reasonable African delegations to exert in the privacy of its discussions a moderating influence on more extreme delegations' attitudes; but perhaps that could have been equally well done in normal, informal contacts 'in the lobbies'. One of the great values of Commonwealth meetings is that their discussions are entirely free; each member is a truly independent representative of a sovereign people; all are equals, and there should be no attempts at 'ganging-up' against Britain or any other partner in the company. It would be unfortunate if the caucus technique developed further—especially if it did so on racialist lines—becoming a regular feature at these gatherings, for that would destroy an essential part of their spirit. Before the end of the conference some of the African and Asian caucus delegates themselves began to feel this, and I hope it may be possible to discourage the resumption of the practice on future occasions.

7. Another generally undesirable feature of the conference *was* the excessive, bitter rudeness which marked some of the African speeches. Outspokenness is a good thing, and it must never be unduly curbed if these meetings are to preserve their constructive usefulness—yet there is, of course, a limit beyond which it usually ceases to be helpful. That limit was, by normal standards, quite frequently over-stepped in September at Marlborough House; and in my judgment it may well continue to be over-stepped on such occasions by some African (and perhaps one or two Caribbean) members for a least a while to come. I trust we British will remain patient about it, as a result of our understanding of its causes. These spring from characteristics of many black African politicians at the present stage of development of their race-conscious nationalism. The fact is that our present difficulties in the Commonwealth do arise chiefly from the arrival in it of several independent African nations who are immature in their approach to modern political problems. This is not primarily their fault; they have not had a chance to acquire experience in the principles and techniques of up-to-date sophisticated government which peoples on other continents have enjoyed. For probably unavoidable reasons (which I need not enlarge on here) Independence has come to them too quickly, and they have assumed the high responsibilities of conducting national and international affairs before many of them became properly qualified to do so. There are impressive exceptions to this generalisation—led by that mellow sage, Jomo Kenyatta—but most of the contemporary African leaders and their principal followers sometimes display political adolescence in their conduct, almost like wilful children. They talk

and act without adequate prior thought, express too readily ill-considered emotions surging through them, and with impulsive glee throw restraint to the winds. Let us understand this defect in a friendly spirit, be fully prepared to make allowances for it, and stay patient in the hope that at least a majority of the African leaders will reasonably quickly learn from experience in responsible positions. I feel little doubt that over a period of years this hope will be realised. We see signs of it happening already. The more reasonable conduct of the Ugandan, Kenyan and some other African delegations at the recent conference, and in our discussions with them about Rhodesia since, is evidence of that. One very important fact is that these Commonwealth meetings, at which the African representatives are brought into intimate, candid and cordial discussions with their more experienced Commonwealth friends from Britain and other continents, can play a distinct part in educating them. This is not the least contribution which the Commonwealth can make towards improved international, and especially inter-racial, understanding and co-operation in these critical times.

8. During the last 12 months all the best African leaders have become self-conscious of their peoples' sometimes appalling failings in the practice of modern government. The series of military *coups d'état*, tribal killings and other deplorable events in nearly a dozen newly independent black African States has made them ashamed—though they can scarcely say so in public. As a result they are in a less self-assertive mood, which will play its part in their gradual acquisition of statesmanship.

9. One reason for the irresponsible talk of many present-day African leaders is that they often deliberately indulge in exaggeration of their private thoughts when they make public speeches. They do this as much in internal politics in their own countries as in international gatherings like the OAU, the United Nations and Commonwealth meetings. I could quote many instances of that habit from my experience as Governor of Kenya three years ago, when quite often responsible political leaders with whom I was in sensible, constructive negotiation would say to me confidentially, 'Don't take any notice of the wild things I'm going to say in a speech in my constituency tomorrow; I don't really mean them, but I've got to say them for effect. When I come back to Nairobi on Monday you'll find me as ready as ever to pursue a sensible policy in practice.' This seems to some extent inevitable at the present stage of growth of many African politicians from adolescence to maturity in the conduct of public affairs—and unfortunately this irresponsible streak in them is aggravated at this critical, emotional time by the foolish racial policies being pursued by the white minority Governments in South Africa, Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies. In the face of that provocation the wiser black African leaders are sometimes forced to be extremist in their public utterances and actions, otherwise they would lose their authority, and be replaced by much less responsible men—a consequence which would be contrary to our interests. This state of affairs may continue for a considerable time to come; and, once more, we shall be wise if we stay patient and understanding.

10. I should add another comment regarding African character, for our comprehension of it is important to our prudent conduct in future Commonwealth Conferences. One reason why this latest meeting at Marlborough House rather pleased the African representatives, and made them feel that the Commonwealth can be a valuable as well as congenial body, is that its chairman did not set any time limit

on the length of their speeches, nor on the protraction of the Rhodesian sessions as a whole. As a consequence some of them did indulge in excessively long-winded statements, and the Rhodesian debate filled by far the greater part of the 10 days' talks. From some points of view both these circumstances were a bore; but to the Africans the prolonged talkativeness was right and proper. Their opinion springs from a traditional method of government in many African tribes. According to their custom, free, democratic and often very lengthy discussions hold a vital place in the settlement of public affairs. Important decisions on policy are taken by the following processes: the tribal elders call a meeting of the whole tribe which every adult male can attend; the problem to be considered is then explained to the gathering by some qualified authority; afterwards a discussion begins, and sometimes continues for days and nights on end because everyone present is entitled to have his say at whatever length he chooses; and at the end of this comprehensive exchange of opinions the elders confer together, reach a decision on the policy to be pursued, and announce their judgment. That announcement is intended to express the whole tribe's consensus of opinion; and it is almost invariably accepted unanimously as the correct policy. So this traditional practice has embedded in African minds a belief that sage decisions come as a result of free, democratic and, if necessary, very protracted talk, in which all concerned are free to express their opinions with complete frankness. Hence the long-windedness of some of our Commonwealth Conference colleagues is not necessarily a demonstration of cussedness, but a reflection of their inherited notion that only by rather exhaustive discussion can true wisdom be revealed. Nevertheless, many modern African leaders recognise that the unavoidably hectic rush of present-day affairs no longer leaves time for business to be effectively enacted in such a leisurely way; and these men will help us to speed-up conference deliberations provided that in principle we are ready to accept the need for reasonably thorough airings of views.

11. Let me now mention another, more helpful African quality, which can be useful in these difficult times. However emotional many Africans may be in their reactions to certain events, and however irresponsible they may become in their public utterances on such occasions, if given a chance many of them will be realists when it comes to a careful, reasoned consideration of the facts of a situation, and of what their right practical policy should be. As I have already indicated, they are prepared then to admit in private that their public speeches are devoted to one purpose—the maintenance of a certain zealous image in the eyes of their political supporters—whilst their official actions must attempt to achieve a different purpose, *i.e.*, the prudent solution of a practical problem. In political affairs most Africans are much less wedded to rigid theories, philosophies and ideologies than are Asians, and even many Europeans. They are ready to face facts—if those facts are brought thoroughly to their notice. An example of this occurred in the recent Commonwealth Conference when President Obote² said (with considerable courage in the face of the then almost unanimous opposite views of his African colleagues round the table) that he was impressed by Mr. Wilson's argument that the British Government could not contemplate mandatory sanctions affecting Rhodesia which would escalate into an economic confrontation with South Africa, because Britain could not possibly afford this, and then he followed this statement by declaring that he therefore favoured

² Dr Milton Obote, president of Uganda, see 383 and 388.

limited, selective sanctions. The latent realism of Africans was further illustrated when several of the other African delegations then accepted the same view. Of course, we must not be unduly misled by this rather encouraging circumstance, and should recognise that their modification of attitude was partly induced by a feeling that this would be a good tactic by which to lead the British Government towards a declaration that there should be no independence in Rhodesia before majority rule. Nevertheless, in considerable measure their attitude represented a readiness to face facts; and this is a trait in their character which can lead them to display common sense in critical situations—if we treat them with confidence, and take trouble to present them with the facts. In this connection I should add that, in my opinion, we can regard leaders like Kenyatta, Obote, Kaunda and Nyerere as just as trustworthy with selected secret information as are other of our Commonwealth colleagues like Pearson, Holt and Holyoake.³

12. I do not pretend that all these considerations lead to a conclusion that the recent conference has cleared the way for the emergence of a widely inter-racial Commonwealth which will give full co-operative support to the policies which we British think right on all important international issues. As I have said, some of the features in the conference were unfortunate, and some of the traits in African character which I have mentioned will continue for some time to create formidable difficulties for us. Even the more responsible African Presidents and Prime Ministers will persist in sometimes saying one thing in public and another in private; they may persevere in trying to put pressure on us to follow certain repugnant policies; and they will remain inevitably sensitive to some kinds of emotional outcries by the African masses when those multitudes are misguided by more extremist, rival leaders. Moreover, the immaturity of many African peoples in modern government, and their consequential tendency to relapse into primitive methods of rule—such as has been demonstrated at various recent times in the Congo, Nigeria, Uganda and other independent black African States—will continue to create other kinds of frustrations. No one in his senses will deny that a period of considerable strain still lies ahead of us in our relations with contemporary Africa—and those strains may well be gravely aggravated by the short-sighted racialist policies of the present white minority Governments in Southern Africa.

13. Nevertheless, it is of great importance to maintain if possible the remarkably comprehensive multi-racial Commonwealth of white, brown, black, yellow and other peoples which has now evolved under Britain's guiding leadership from our earlier colonial empire. Any diminution in its size or variety would severely reduce both the prestige and the influence of Great Britain in the contemporary world. A dwindling of the Commonwealth by resignations of any of its members would have another grave consequence. Some of the most critical and potentially dangerous problems which humanity will have to face, and resolve, in the next few decades are those caused by inter-racial disparities or rivalries—such as the disparities between the economically 'Have' and 'Have not' nations round the earth, and such as the colour rivalry which is now building up between white dominated Southern Africa and black dominated Central, East and West Africa. Other 'colour' difficulties affect our relations with China—the sensible solution of which may well be the most important task of all over the next century. Probably no international organisation can do as much

³ Keith J Holyoak, prime minister of New Zealand (see 6, note 4).

towards solving these baffling questions by patient, friendly co-operation as can our multi-racial Commonwealth. If we continue to foster, guide and lead it, it may yet prove to be the British people's finest contribution to a happier human civilisation.

14. Since the attitudes of the African representatives on the Rhodesian problem dominated so much of the deliberations of the recent conference, I am circulating copies of this despatch to our High Commissioners in the independent Commonwealth countries in Africa, to our Ambassadors in Washington, Pretoria and Addis Ababa, and to our Representative at the United Nations in New York.

255 DO 193/79, no 14 10 Dec 1966
 'Planning exercise: the Commonwealth as a British interest': letter
 from A R Adair¹ (Nicosia) to R Walker on the view from Cyprus
 [Extract]

Please refer to your letter 2 PLA 39/41/30 of 9 November.² (Our reply to your letter 2-CON.386/11(42) of 26 September crossed Halliley's letter to me of 11 November).

2. Much of the ground was covered in the High Commissioner's despatch No. 1 of 20 January, but in the light of the enclosure to your letter I would add these further thoughts. Our stake in Cyprus relative to the size and importance of the Island is considerable; it stems from our presence in the Bases, our trading position, our role as a guarantor power (with Greece and Turkey) under the Treaty of Guarantee, and our connections as the former colonial power. Owing, however, to the present complex and unstable political situation our influence now and perhaps for a long time to come, is severely limited.

3. The Bases are important to us; they enable us to make our contribution to CENTO (of which Pakistan is a member), they lend stability to the area and less directly . . . this military presence fills what could otherwise become a dangerous vacuum in Cyprus itself. It is difficult to judge whether a severance of the Commonwealth connection would seriously affect our position in the Bases. The loss of a preferential trading position would reduce the extent of our influence generally and indirectly weaken our hold on them; on the other hand the set-back the Cyprus economy would undoubtedly suffer might force the Cyprus Government to rely even more heavily on our defence spending in the island than it does at present.

4. Our economic ties, in themselves, are of no great consequence to us. Although Cyprus is a good market for British exports, thanks to the Commonwealth relationship in its widest sense and our traditionally friendly commercial links with Cyprus, these are valued at only about £17 million to £18 million per *year*, which is insignificant in relation to the average value of the United Kingdom's exports in 1966 at £410 million per *month*. Britain takes some £8 million to £10 million worth of Cyprus's exports annually, mostly citrus, potatoes and other agricultural produce, and wine products. It is true that we get these goods on favourable terms owing to the system of Commonwealth preference, but if the Cyprus source of supply were to dry up there would be no lack of alternative sources, e.g. Spain, Portugal, Israel, Algiers, Greece etc. The British potato crisp manufacturers would, no doubt, be put

¹ Deputy high commissioner, Cyprus (see 113, note 1).

² See 250.

out if Britain did not have access to the Cyprus spring crop of potatoes, some 80,000 tons valued at over £2 million, but the overall effect would be only marginal.

5. Our traditional links, of a personal and professional nature, would inevitably be diluted if Cyprus were to leave the Commonwealth but while some 120,000 Cypriots reside permanently in Britain many ties would remain unaffected for a long time to come.

6. Looking to the future, especially as Britain moves in the direction of Europe, Cyprus will certainly seek alternative markets for her products. The recent introduction of amendments to the customs tariff, covering a wide range of goods, shows that Cyprus is not prepared to give new or larger tariff preferences or other trade benefits to Britain in order to preserve the present advantage of Commonwealth preference. On the contrary, it would appear that Cyprus will be prepared gradually to dismantle the preferential structure over a period of years. In economic terms, therefore, Cyprus's importance to Britain will tend to diminish. Cyprus is not a large holder of sterling. Her sterling reserves are approximately £52 million, and these may now be gradually reduced; the Cyprus authorities have, in fact, already given an indication in this sense, against which we are currently making representations.

7. The 'Cyprus Problem' and the state of suspended civil war which exists here affects the position under most of the headings in the enclosure to your letter. The effect of Commonwealth membership is completely overshadowed by local considerations and the Cyprus Government's attitude towards the Commonwealth will in the long term be entirely dependent on the British attitude towards the Cyprus problem as well as, of course, on the nature of any solution which may be devised.

8. The question of aid is directly tied to our presence in the Bases rather than the Commonwealth connection, although there will always be a tendency here to expect preferential treatment because of the Commonwealth tie. . . .

256 DO 193/79, no 15

12 Dec 1966

[The Commonwealth as a British interest]: letter from P C H Holmer¹ (Singapore) to R Walker

I am sorry that we have not managed to meet your deadline in replying to your letter 2/PLA.39/41/30 of 9 November² about your planning exercise on the Commonwealth as a British interest. We had hoped that the visit of Mr. Arnold Smith³ might shed further light on local attitudes, but it has not really done so.

2. By way of background, I would refer you to the High Commissioner's despatch No. 3 of 30 December 1965 about Singapore's foreign policy and No. 6 of 22 August 1966 on Singapore's prospects after a year of separate existence. To sum up what has already been said in these despatches, Singapore's separation from Malaysia left her in a precarious position as a city State without a hinterland, with an economy still based mainly upon entrêpot trade, and as a predominantly Chinese island surrounded by potentially hostile Malay and Moslem neighbours. Singapore's urgent need is to build up and consolidate her economic position to ensure a continuation

¹ Deputy high commissioner, Singapore, 1966–1969.

² See 250.

³ First Commonwealth secretary-general, see 258, note 1.

of her present comparatively high standard of living. Her foreign policy is directed at ensuring her economic and political survival, and (within certain limits) any method which seems likely to achieve this aim will be adopted. In other words Singapore's policies (like, I suspect, those of most other countries) are founded on self-interest. If I may venture a general comment on your paragraph 5, the smaller the country, the less 'enlightened' its self-interest can afford to be!

Singapore and the Commonwealth

3. The Commonwealth is only one of several circles of interest in which Singapore is involved, and Singapore's Commonwealth connections have to be evaluated against the background of her various other connections. In particular, mainly in order to establish her separate and autonomous identity in the eyes of the world (in spite of the presence of the British bases) Singapore has felt obliged to adopt the role of a non-aligned member of the Afro-Asian community, and can be expected to take a line consistent with this role on any matter of international interest, provided Singapore's own immediate interests, if directly involved, do not dictate some modification of this line. The 'democratic socialist' approach of the ruling People's Action Party and their long battle against communist infiltration have committed the Singapore Government to an anti-communist policy at home and have led to links with members of the Socialist International and, in Asia, to a special interest in relations with India and Cambodia. But at the same time the non-aligned role and the constant search for markets have also led to the establishment of trade relations with European Soviet bloc countries. Although it has been possible so far to steer clear of official links with the Chinese People's Republic, no Singapore Government can afford to take up a position which is specifically anti-Chinese. Another important context from Singapore's point of view is the Asian regional context. In the long run the best chance of survival for Singapore seems to lie in association with a wider regional organisation.

4. Thus Singapore wants and needs to belong to any larger entity the membership of which is consistent with her general posture and is likely on balance to promote her interests. The Commonwealth is one of these entities, and an important one. To those who think about these things, the idea of the Commonwealth as a multi-racial microcosm no doubt has considerable appeal in this multi-racial island where the preservation of racial harmony is basic to stability, let alone progress. But I think it is true to say that, in practical terms, membership of the Commonwealth is seen as a means to an end, not an end in itself. At this point in time, the most important thing for Singapore's survival, both from the point of view of its contribution to the economy and from the point of view of defence, is the continued existence of the British base here. One major factor which makes it comparatively easy for Singapore to retain the base without forfeiting its 'non-aligned', Afro-Asian status is Britain's continued membership of the (largely Afro-Asian) Commonwealth. If Britain left the Commonwealth or the Commonwealth broke up, Singapore would be likely to be faced with a painful choice between retention of the base and continued membership of the Afro-Asian club. It is very largely for this reason that the Singapore leaders are anxious to see the continuation of the Commonwealth and will go to some lengths (as Lee Kuan Yew did in London in September) to prevent it breaking up. What I have said about the British base applies also, to a modified extent, to the contribution made by Australia and New Zealand. Singapore hopes that these two countries, and more particularly

Australia, will take an increasing interest and play an increasing part in defence matters in Singapore, partly as an insurance against the day when the British presence may begin to diminish. If the presence of white soldiers is going to remain necessary, it is much easier to justify a Commonwealth presence than, say, an American presence (although the Singaporeans would see no objection to a burden-sharing exercise by which a continued Commonwealth presence was discreetly subsidised by the Americans).

5. The British bases, though the primary factor, are not, of course, the whole of what the Commonwealth means to Singapore's leaders. They find it useful as an international forum; at the last meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, Lee Kuan Yew was able to play a role out of all proportion to the size of his country. It also gives them easier access, by way of already existing machinery, to certain countries, Afro-Asian and others, with whom Singapore may wish to develop relations. Despite her heavy economic dependence on the bases, Singapore also manages to represent their existence on the island as a service to the Commonwealth and thus as justifying a further *quid pro quo* in the form of special consideration for Singapore's economic problems. (Sometimes it is argued that a contribution should be expected from the West as a whole, including the United States, rather than from the Commonwealth as such.) Membership of the Commonwealth does provide some preferential access to markets for Singapore products. As regards Britain's possible entry into the Common Market, this is not regarded here as a threat in itself. Indeed, insofar as it increases Britain's economic strength it will be regarded as a good thing for Britain and by extension for Singapore. But in practice the Singapore attitude when the time comes will depend on the practical consequences of the move in terms of tariff policies, the effect on the U.K. market for Singapore products, the possibility of associate status for Singapore and, in the longer run, the possible effect of membership of the E.E.C. on Britain's defence policies East of Suez. For a fuller statement of Singapore's attitude, please see our telegrams nos. 37 Saving of 13 April and 599 of 15 August.

Representation

6. By reason of our historical connection with Singapore and the presence of the British base on the Island, Britain has a special position here which is reflected in the influence enjoyed by this High Commission as compared with other Missions. To a lesser extent the Australian and New Zealanders share this close relationship.

Disputes

7. We cannot avoid being directly concerned in the dispute between Singapore and Malaysia since our base facilities cover both territories, and from the defence point of view, we must regard Malaysia and Singapore as a single whole. It is difficult to judge whether and, if so, to what extent, common membership of the Commonwealth has affected the Malaysian/Singapore dispute. It seems possible that it may in some minor respects have blunted the sharpest edges: for example, the existing restrictions on travel between the two countries might by now have led to the imposition of visas if this had not been contrary to Commonwealth practice.

United Nations

8. Singapore would generally aim to align herself with other countries of the Afro-Asian world; but her reaction to any proposals by her Afro-Asian colleagues in

the United Nations which might be likely to affect adversely or even break up the Commonwealth would be cautious in the extreme. Singapore would not be in the van of any movement to break up the Commonwealth, although she would probably follow the crowd if a general break-up seemed inevitable. In this context the example of India would be especially important. This question is discussed in relation to the Rhodesia problem in our telegram no. 529 of 19 July.

Aid and technical assistance

9. The aid which Singapore expects from us, apart from our support to the economy through the bases, is mainly in the form of trade, investment and to a lesser extent, technical assistance. In trade, what is now looked for mainly is market opportunities in Britain and other Commonwealth countries for the output of Singapore's existing factories and those industries which it is hoped to attract. In the field of investment, what is looked for is investment in the form of new factories or joint manufacturing enterprises in which, if not cash, at least production knowledge and management expertise will be contributed from overseas. In this respect Singapore's inclusion in the sterling area, rather than her membership of the Commonwealth, is important. Singapore will be all the more anxious to remain in the sterling area after June 1967 when she will have a separate currency from Malaysia, since it is important for a trading economy such as Singapore's that the currency should be closely linked with a reserve currency like sterling. Our technical assistance to Singapore is administered mainly through the Colombo Plan in which Commonwealth countries, together with the United States, are the main donors. Singapore would certainly object to any development which threatened the continued existence of the Plan, though this would presumably continue irrespective of changes in the Commonwealth.

Trade

10. British trade has certainly benefited from our special position here. The fact that Singapore was founded as a British entrépot gave us a head start over other trading countries though more recently our lead has been shrinking. Nevertheless, although Japan is following close on our heels, Britain is still the largest single supplier to the pan-Malayan market (Singapore import statistics by themselves have little significance since so much of what is imported into Singapore is re-exported to Malaysia). Britain still enjoys many trading advantages as a result of being here first; British brand names are well-established; the P.W.D. and other Government departments had, in the past, standardised to a great extent with British equipment; and British bankers and merchant houses have a prominent role in the economy. With independence there is no longer the same tendency automatically to order British equipment and British suppliers now have to compete more keenly to retain business. None of these trading advantages, however, are dependent on Singapore's continuance in the Commonwealth. Unlike Malaysia, Commonwealth preferences on import duties are not a major factor since Singapore has traditionally been, until recent years, a free port, and there were relatively few duties on imported goods. In any case, Singapore does not feel any special obligation to give preferential treatment to the products of Commonwealth countries except on a purely reciprocal basis, and has recently reduced or abolished some of these preferences. Official Singapore policy is to widen the present range of trading partners; bilateral trade agreements have been signed this year with a number of East European countries and more can be expected.

The intangibles

11. In this field above all it is difficult to speak in general terms of relations between Singapore and the Commonwealth as a whole because bilateral links with Britain are so much stronger than any other. Singapore is, after all, a British creation, and British influence remains strong. Singaporeans, though glad to be rid of colonial rule, retain considerable admiration for the British way of doing things. The British-orientated system of education is largely responsible for the widespread appreciation of our cultural heritage in the widest sense. There is a large British presence in the defence sphere and in the business world. English is one of the four official languages of Singapore, and although Malay is encouraged as the 'National Language' English remains unchallenged as the language of government, the law, the larger commercial firms, and of the majority of the educated population. English customs and institutions retain a high prestige. The judiciary, the legislature, the civil service, and the greater part of the educational system are based on British models, and in a country where there is such a mixture of communities that there is no one indigenous cultural tradition, British influence fills the gap and provides a unifying factor; it would be hard to imagine Singapore without it. The connection with Britain is kept alive, apart from the military and commercial aspects of our presence, by a continual flow of students and trainees, both private and Government-sponsored, to Britain, and by a return flow of British academicians, experts and visitors of all kinds.

12. For all these reasons, the tendency has been for Singapore to turn to Britain first for help in most fields, then to Australia and New Zealand, and only in the third place to the United States. There is now a tendency for the emphasis to shift away from Britain towards Australia and New Zealand, not primarily because they are Commonwealth countries (though the community and tradition and language no doubt help) but for geographical reasons, as they are the nearest developed countries with a close interest in South East Asia. For example, students increasingly go for education to Australia for economic reasons, even if they would prefer to study in Britain. It is probable that this tendency would grow rapidly if British forces were withdrawn from this area. But even in those circumstances the 'Commonwealth' connection would still exist with Australasia substituted for Britain. This connection, being based on propinquity and a community of interest, would be likely to survive any run-down or disappearance of the Commonwealth as an entity. So, I think, would the 'intangible' cultural links with Britain, because they form an essential part of the fabric of this multi-racial society, though their influence on bilateral political and economic relations would in that event tend to decline, and would of course decline more swiftly if our military presence were to be removed.

257 DO 193/79, no 16

12 Dec 1966

'The Commonwealth as A British interest': letter from R G Britten¹
(Kingston) to R Walker on the view from Jamaica

I am writing, with apologies for not meeting your deadline, in reply to your letter of the 9th of November² in which you asked us for a contribution to your study on the

¹ Deputy high commissioner, Jamaica, 1964–1969.

² See 250.

extent to which British interests are affected by the Commonwealth. I think the best way we can set about this is to give you a preliminary paragraph on Jamaican attitudes to the Commonwealth and then to go one by one through the headings listed in the paper attached to your letter. I have restricted my comments almost entirely to the inter-related causes and effects of the Commonwealth link between Britain and Jamaica. Jamaica's outlook has marked differences from that of the rest of the Commonwealth Caribbean and is not representative of the region as a whole.

2. *Jamaican attitudes to the Commonwealth*

These are best summarised in a statement made by Mr. Sangster *à propos* of the last Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference. 'I don't think anybody would want to break up the Commonwealth. It has done an outstanding job in its field and has the capacity and opportunity, particularly in the multi-racial field, of welding peoples together'. This view is widely held among the leaders of the only two significant political parties in Jamaica and owes much of its origin to the historical processes which have formed modern Jamaica. The ancestors of a small minority of Jamaicans were immigrants from Britain; the ancestors of the great majority were brought here as slaves by the British, and as an act of deliberate policy were divorced from their cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. A society, in essence English with modifications governed by local conditions, thus developed from scratch, with almost all Jamaican institutions being either started by, or copied from, British counterparts. There is accordingly little of the conflict present in Asian and African Commonwealth countries between traditional ideas and imported British ideas. Making the usual allowances for differences in colour, climate, temperament and so on, Jamaica is in many ways a little Britain of its own, long insulated by history and geography from other outside influences, although increasingly showing signs of its nearness to the United States. (But American influence, though strong and growing, does not on the whole militate against Jamaica's Commonwealth membership.) Most older Jamaicans, the ones at present exercising power, or influencing the powerful, have a genuine affection and admiration for things British, and regard their link with Britain and their consequent association with the Commonwealth as a phenomenon dictated almost by a law of nature. This attitude will doubtless undergo a progressive dilution as a new generation brought up in independence takes over; but it is unlikely ever to disappear completely if only because English is the only Jamaican language. It is an outlook that is reflected throughout the comments which follow.

3. (a) *The Commonwealth as a whole*

Jamaica is a small country with a small and inexperienced diplomatic service; she carries comparatively little weight in world affairs. Nevertheless, Jamaica has come out unambiguously in favour of the Commonwealth, of which she regards Britain as the Head, and in general can be relied upon to play a beneficial and moderating role in the United Nations and elsewhere, particularly over issues in which Jamaica can act as a 'bridge' between the established powers and the emergent nations. Jamaicans value their political association with us through the Commonwealth and they benefit from our economic inter-relationship (see (h) below). The Acting Prime Minister, at any rate, expects Britain to show leadership in the Commonwealth, and regards the British Prime Minister as a sort of President of the 'Cabinet' of Commonwealth

Prime Ministers. It is thus almost inevitable that a diminished British political and economic effort in the Commonwealth would seem to the Jamaicans to reduce the value of the Commonwealth link, and they would be proportionately less disposed to be helpful to us. They are already showing signs of apprehension about British intentions towards the E.E.C. Unless Jamaica were able to get substitute benefits from some form of associated membership of the E.E.C., she would almost certainly regard British entry as a dilution of the value and strength of the Commonwealth association. The Jamaican politicians and officials like the idea and the practice of Commonwealth consultation—as distinct from the mere passing on of information from Britain to a Commonwealth member: they may feel that consultation is less frequent than it should be.

(b) *Representation*

When it comes to our relations with Jamaican Ministers and Jamaican officials there is no doubt that the British High Commission has the edge over all other Diplomatic Missions in Kingston. Senior officials, many of whom were educated in Britain and nearly all of whom are former Colonial Service officers, take it for granted that if they want help or advice they should turn first to us. This easy relationship obviously works to our advantage.

(c) *Disputes*

In its short independent life Jamaica has not been involved in a dispute with another Commonwealth country or with anybody else. But it does seem to me that the Commonwealth has a role to play in mediation, arbitration and so on, and in generally assisting endeavours to settle disputes. The question has not yet arisen but I am certain that Jamaica would gladly offer to send people to assist in any Commission or team that was formed to mediate in an inter-Commonwealth dispute. Given your premise that world stability is a cardinal aim in British external policy, this willingness to intervene comes out clearly as an advantage to Britain of the Commonwealth connection.

(d) *Defence*

Jamaica's almost old fashioned Britishness, and in particular the British training, background, and inheritance of the Jamaica Defence Force, would make it seem natural to the Jamaicans that if they were in trouble with another country they would expect British assistance. Although no formal treaty exists which would lend colour to this belief, it is, I think, simply taken for granted by the Jamaicans that this is so. The same would apply if there were an internal security threat beyond the Government's ability to control. Equally, although we could not expect them to give *carte blanche* approval to our using Jamaican facilities for our own naval, military or air operations, the Jamaicans would be inclined to be helpful provided that the political aims of the operation were unlikely to cause them international embarrassment. Their assumption that we would help them does much to cement our bilateral political relations. The Jamaicans would certainly not expect a similar benevolent attitude from other Commonwealth Caribbean countries, but to a lesser extent might hope for Canadian assistance. They would also rely upon the United States, both for external defence in a major war, and for internal security help, if necessary.

(e) United Nations

A weakness that Jamaican representation at the United Nations shares with other newly independent Commonwealth countries is that the Jamaican representative there is not always under the full control of the Ministry of External Affairs in Kingston and is apt on occasion to voice his own rather than his country's opinions. We are not well informed about the degree of success with which our delegation in New York lobby the Jamaican delegation on points of particular interest to us, but lobbying approaches in Kingston are always received with courtesy and are frequently fruitful. A reduction in our political and economic effort in the Commonwealth would diminish the effectiveness of these approaches.

(f) Aid

Apart from the tailing off of C.D. and W. funds we have given very little project aid to Jamaica. The Jamaicans have accepted aid from the Americans and from the Canadians and are grateful. There is no reason to suppose that they would be any less grateful, for aid from West Germany, France or any other non-Communist country. The Commonwealth connection here is of little relevance, except insofar as it may increase the disappointment which Jamaicans feel about their receiving neither capital aid nor soft loans from Britain.

(g) Technical assistance

As with capital aid the Jamaican Government find technical assistance acceptable from any Western source. Nevertheless when they are after something new they usually approach us first, almost out of habit. This is partly because of the easy and informal relationships that prevail between us and Jamaican officials (see (e) above) and partly because the Jamaicans seem to feel that if we are in a financial position to help we will do so without fuss. By the same token they have reacted sympathetically to the limitations set upon our technical assistance as a result of our present economic difficulties. Since a number of technical assistance projects have a direct bearing upon subsequent exports from Britain, this attitude is of value to us.

(h) Trade relationships

The trade figures between Britain and Jamaica in the four years since Jamaica became independent show a small but consistent balance in our favour.

	1962	1963	1964	1965
Imports to Jamaica from U.K.:	£23½ m	£21 m	£25 m	£25 m
Exports to U.K. from Jamaica:	£18½ m	£21 m	£23 m	£21 m

While there is no formal tariff agreement between Britain and Jamaica, Jamaica offers Commonwealth preference on a very wide range of articles. In certain fields, particularly motor vehicles and some machinery, we enjoy a considerable advantage over foreign competitors. In return we give preference to a number of Jamaican exports and give Jamaica extremely generous treatment over sugar, bananas and citrus. It is impossible to isolate figures to demonstrate precisely the value to each of us of the preference system, but the balance of benefit in cash terms is undoubtedly in Jamaica's favour. Nevertheless I imagine that most of the difference could reasonably be offset against our commitment to help under-developed countries. In general our exports do well out of the Commonwealth connection though despite it

the U.S.A. has replaced Britain as Jamaica's leading trading partner, and if it were severed there is no doubt that American goods in particular would make considerable further inroads into British sales. An important benefit the Commonwealth link brings to Britain is that the Jamaican Government goes out of its way to place orders for Government purchase with Britain. We get well over half the orders placed.

(i) *Non-official relationships and the intangibles*

As I remarked in paragraph 2, Jamaica in many ways is a modified and rather old-fashioned Britain. The Queen is Queen of Jamaica. There is Parliamentary Government on the Westminster model, and a fundamentally British legal system (red-robed judges and all). English is the sole language. Vehicles drive on the lefthand side of the road. The armed services are British trained and organised and use British equipment, ranks and uniforms. The Civil Service operates on British lines. At the Remembrance Day Service, four years after Independence, the Governor-General led the assembled congregation in singing 'Dominion over palm and pine'. With this background there are so many intangible links that they are beyond enumeration. A proportion of the set-up is, of course, a hangover from the days of Colonial rule and will be eroded by time and by a more independent minded and more widely educated younger generation. Unofficial links with the U.S.A. and the influence of the American way of life particularly on younger people are increasing constantly, counterbalanced to some extent by the irritations caused by the presence of large numbers of Americans, tourists, and other. But short of a major political upheaval involving the overthrow of the constitution, the Jamaican attitude towards Britain described above is likely to survive for the foreseeable future. Inherent in this attitude is an almost instinctive understanding of the British point of view. It 'exerts a beneficial political and social influence upon bilateral relations.' In other words, as Sir Alexander Morley³ once said, this place is a sort of tropical West Indian New Zealand, for the present at least.

(j) *Other relationships, etc.*

One of the most important elements in Anglo-Jamaican relations is of course the immigration to Britain of Jamaicans, who in the past few years have made up about 6% of the annual average total of Commonwealth immigrants and have provided the third largest individual national component, after India and Pakistan. To Jamaica emigration is a necessary part of the solution to the problem posed by a rapidly growing population in a small island with few natural resources. Since Jamaica has always regarded Britain as her natural protector and friend, Jamaicans were correspondingly disturbed and resentful when the Commonwealth Immigrants Act came into force, and the consequent ill-feeling produced the first real bone of contention between the two countries. It is a moot point how far the existence of a large Jamaican community in Britain exerts a beneficial effect on relations between the two countries. On the one hand there are large numbers of Jamaicans, some of whom revisit their native land, who have got to know Britain well and have prospered economically; on the other hand, there is constant reprinting of items from the British press about racial discrimination in Britain, which is likely to increase as the

³ UK high commissioner, Jamaica, 1962-1965.

younger generation of immigrants fail to get jobs they feel they are entitled to. These two factors probably cancel one another out.

4. *Conclusion*

Of all the recently independent Commonwealth countries Jamaica, as we have frequently said in correspondence with the Atlantic Department, is the one that approaches most closely the standards of international behaviour that we have come to expect from the Old Commonwealth and have usually failed to find from the New. Despite occasional difficulties over, for example, the Commonwealth Immigrants Act and Rhodesia, our relationship with independent Jamaica has been a happy one. The Jamaicans have an almost touching belief in British good faith, decency and right-mindedness. The Jamaicans look upon themselves as something of a bridge between the Old World and the New—and the Old Commonwealth and the New, especially in Africa—and usually do their best to exercise a moderating influence on the more extremist emergent nations. They set a high value on the Commonwealth connection both as it affects their relationship with Britain and with other Commonwealth countries. Politically they are thus an asset to us, a usefulness deriving directly from the Commonwealth connection. Economically we break about even from the Commonwealth link now, but would probably lose if it were broken. As regards defence we have run down our Military and Naval presence in the Caribbean substantially but, as H.M. Ambassador in Washington pointed out in his Despatch No. 158 of the 29th of November, the Americans are looking to us to increase our defence commitment in the area. Should we do so the maintenance of the Commonwealth link will ease our way considerably.

5. To sum up, Britain in its relationships with Jamaica, obtains positive value from the Commonwealth connection.

258 FCO 49/198, no 4

[Jan 1967]

'Australian attitude to Commonwealth Secretariat': Commonwealth Office brief for Mr Bowden's visit to Australia in Feb 1967

Mr. Arnold Smith's¹ efforts to interpret his role differently from what was intended by some Prime Ministers when they set up the Secretariat continue to be deplored by the Australians [, an] attitude with which we are in sympathy. Mr. Smith was however appointed by a great majority and has some years to run in office. We entirely agree that we must continue our efforts to keep the Secretariat under close control, but still consider it preferable to avoid challenging him on the less essential matters (e.g. his wish to be styled 'Excellency') and reserve our main fire for matters of substance and principle. He still undoubtedly retains much good will amongst the newer

¹ Smith had been one of five candidates in June 1965 when the appointment of the first secretary-general was decided at the London meeting of Commonwealth prime ministers. The others came from Sierra Leone, Australia (two nominees) and New Zealand. Belatedly a nominee from Sri Lanka was also considered. The prime ministers thought it would be inappropriate to decide the issue themselves and accepted a suggestion by Dr Eric Williams, prime minister of Trinidad (see 283, note 2) that a selection committee of officials should be appointed, chaired by the UK, consisting of representatives from each region of the Commonwealth, the representatives being chosen from countries who did not put up a candidate (PREM 13/180).

Members which can, incidentally, if he is handled carefully, be helpful to Britain, in particular, with the Rhodesian problem.

2. We feel that some of the other Governments (e.g. India) are also becoming disturbed at Mr. Smith's efforts at self-inflation. It might be a good thing to let this process continue to develop for a while and to let others take the initiative in challenging Mr. Smith. The Secretariat have in any event recently absorbed the Commonwealth Economic Committee and the Commonwealth Education Liaison Unit, the C.E.L.U to form the new Education Division of the Secretariat. As a result of this merger some economies are hoped for and several Commonwealth Governments are known to be closely watching developments in these fields.

3. *Styling of secretary-general as 'Excellency'*

The Agreed Memorandum stated that the Secretary-General should 'be a man of high-standing, equivalent in rank to a Senior High Commissioner' and he enjoys other privileges and amenities as if he were a High Commissioner. The U.N. Secretary-General also is styled 'His Excellency'. Of the 17 replies received only Australia and The Gambia have objected to according him this courtesy title. Australia on the grounds that he is not the accredited representative of a sovereign state and that the Secretariat was conceived as a modest institution not to be modelled on the U.N. While we do not think it either necessary or particularly suitable that the Commonwealth Secretary-General should be styled 'Excellency' there seems to be no harm in according him the title. Many Member countries might misrepresent our motives in opposing it, and we are willing to accept a consensus in favour. Mr. Smith is known to be intent on pursuing this question.

Other points which might well be raised in discussion include the following items, which are contained, with general comment, in the background note:—

1. Chairmanship of Commonwealth Meetings
2. Membership of the Commonwealth
3. Legal Section of the Secretariat
4. Finance Committee of the Secretariat.

Background note with 258

Australia shares Britain's unease over the Secretariat and in particular Mr. Arnold Smith's efforts at self-inflation. Sir Robert Menzies took offence at Mr. Smith's circular letter proposing the Lagos Prime Ministers' Meeting on the grounds that it was a matter for direct communication between Heads of Government. Australia wishes to confine the Secretariat's activities strictly within the limits of the Agreed Memorandum (copy attached).² She is anxious to maintain close contact with us on this, often embarrassingly so.

2. We too wish to control the Secretariat's activities but realise that the undoubted goodwill to Mr. Smith in the newer Commonwealth can be channelled to our own advantage (e.g. in the informal approaches about the time and place of future Prime Ministers' Meetings). We should like to encourage Australia:—

² Not printed.

- (a) to take a more positive interest in the Secretariat;
- (b) to avoid recrimination on minor matters, which may lead on occasion to Britain and Australia appearing to be alone against the rest of the Commonwealth;
- (c) to reserve her fire for matters of principle and substance, on which Britain and Australia are generally in line.

3. *Chairmanship of meetings*

The older Commonwealth countries feel that the Commonwealth Secretary-General should not chair any meeting concerned with policy. This may indeed be the general wish. Australia however appears to think that he should not chair any meeting. We feel that it would not be improper for him to chair meetings concerned merely with Commonwealth procedures or machinery; or, if so directed by the meeting, sub-committees of officials which are part of Ministerial meetings. We hold dearly the convention of the host country providing the chairman. However we may sooner or later have to consider conceding the principle in relation to certain meetings in Britain as so many meetings are held here and Britain thus so often has the chair. But we hope that this will not prove necessary.

4. *Membership of the Commonwealth*

Australia feels that an application to retain Commonwealth membership on the assumption of republican status should be processed direct at Head of Government level, and not through the Secretariat. On Malawi's application Mr. Holt replied direct to Dr. Banda, although the approach was through the Secretariat. We do not ourselves feel that any great principle is conceded by a Prime Minister asking the Secretariat to do the processing on his behalf, and although this was not specifically mentioned in the Agreed Memorandum it does not seem to be against the spirit in which the Secretariat was conceived.

5. *Proposed Legal Section for the Secretariat*

The conference of Law Ministers in London, May 1966 recommended a Legal Section for the Secretariat, to act as a clearing house for legal information and to keep governments informed about changes in the laws of Commonwealth countries. The idea was first raised at the Law Ministers' Meeting in Canberra. Australia doubts the usefulness of the proposed Legal Section and would rather rely on the Commonwealth Section of the British Institute of Comparative Law. We feel that a Legal Section could complement the British Institute of Comparative Law, and provided it started in a modest way would do no harm and would remove the apparent Anglo-centricity of the present arrangements. A Committee of Officials was appointed at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Meeting in September 1966 to consider in detail certain agenda items one of which was the proposed Legal Section of the Secretariat. The outcome of the meeting of the Committee of Officials was that since there was no general consensus of opinion either for or against the establishment of a Legal Section it was recommended to Prime Ministers that a decision on this should be postponed for consideration by Commonwealth Governments at a later date. The Prime Ministers agreed to this recommendation. The Lord Chancellor was of the opinion that we ought to look at the position again in three months. The papers are now with the Legal Department.

6. *Finance committee of the Secretariat*

Possibly to demonstrate a lack of interest, Australia did not seek to be represented on the sub-committee which considers the budget of the Secretariat. Later, however, she realised that she had lost an opportunity to curb the Secretariat's activities. She now attends the meetings of the sub-committee and takes a leading part in attempts to cut the Secretariat's budget. The question of the formulation of rules of procedure for both Finance and Finance Sub-Committee is at present under consideration, we should hope to obtain agreement that the rule providing for membership of the sub-committee should include provision for three permanent members and for the annual rotation of a fixed percentage of remaining members in that event. Australia might wish to seek nomination as permanent member or alternatively a seat on the committee in place of a retiring member under the annual rotation.

259 FCO 49/153, no 1

2 Jan 1967

[The Commonwealth as a British interest]: letter from P M Foster¹
(Kampala) to R Walker on the view from Uganda

Thank you for your letter 2 PLA/39/41/30 of 9 November about the Commonwealth as a British interest.² I am afraid it has not been possible to comply with your request to let you have a reply by the end of November. The second half of that month was too busy, with Rhodesia and Mrs. Hart's visit, for us to spare the time to give this subject much serious thought. The delay has however had the advantage that I have been able to discuss the matter with the High Commissioner after his return from leave and am therefore able to write with his endorsement.

2. I think we should start this exercise by stating a few basic assumptions about Uganda's own relationship to the Commonwealth since that is obviously germane to the consequences for us of a change. In the first place, Uganda interprets the Commonwealth link as primarily one with Britain, the former colonial power during 68 years between 1894 and 1962. In fact, the Commonwealth serves as a convenient cover for the preservation of a good many links with Britain which might, without it, stand out a little too obviously in the context of a non-aligned foreign policy. It is true that the Commonwealth brings Uganda into relationships with, say, India, Australia and Canada which would not otherwise exist, but Uganda would wish, irrespective of the Commonwealth relationship to have links with India (and to a lesser extent Pakistan) because these two countries have historical links with Uganda and have left substantial resident minorities behind. The same historical considerations apply to Uganda's relations with Kenya, Tanzania and perhaps, at a later stage, Zambia. Here, neighbourliness and shared historical links are the substance of a close relationship which exists quite independently of the Commonwealth or the O.A.U. As far as the old Commonwealth is concerned, all that is involved is a modicum of technical assistance which, though valuable and appreciated, would not be missed too seriously if it was withheld or diverted elsewhere. With the exception of her East African neighbours, and possibly Ghana (which, through the medium of Nkrumah's Africa Bureau, traded for a time on its

¹ Deputy high commissioner, Uganda, 1966–1968.

² See 250.

Commonwealth relationship with Uganda to interfere in domestic affairs here) the Commonwealth link between Uganda and other African members is tenuous and the O.A.U. means very much more although Uganda takes a pretty sceptical view of the record and potentialities of that organisation.

3. If one assumes the Angle-centric nature of the Commonwealth so far as Uganda is concerned, it follows from this that a decision by Uganda in present circumstances to leave the Commonwealth—or for that matter, a decision by ourselves to do so—would amount on either side to an at least partial rejection of a long-standing, historical relationship permeating the political, economic, social and cultural fields. It would be difficult to visualize such a state of affairs being reached unless there had earlier been a very serious embitterment of our relations, possibly over a considerable period of time which might have involved the rupture of diplomatic relations. The Commonwealth link has already survived very considerable strain during the last year exerted by the Rhodesia situation, and if one excludes Rhodesia, it is not easy to think of any other issue likely to precipitate a purely Commonwealth crisis. (South Africa is of course another major irritant, but the situation there is not regarded as so directly a British or Commonwealth responsibility.) The point is that if such a crisis were to occur, because of Rhodesia or some other cause, the embitterment preceding the break in the Commonwealth would probably be serious enough to mean that our relations, even while the Commonwealth remained in existence, had been so seriously strained that a break would be little more than a formal recognition of an existing state of affairs. In other words, the baby is our own bilateral relationship with Uganda and if that had gone down the drain we would not have to worry too much about the bath water.

4. The tidiest way of dealing with this subject would perhaps be to set out a balance sheet under the various headings laid down in paragraph 6 of the paper attached to your letter of the 9th November. But I think that this would probably be a rather artificial exercise because each item would need to be qualified in so many ways: in particular by distinctions between the Commonwealth and the bilateral aspects of our relationship and, if this relationship were changed or broken, between the intrinsic consequences of ending or diminishing the Commonwealth relationship—a largely abstract calculation—and the actual consequences, dependent as explained above, upon the attitude of the parties before, during and after the event. It therefore seems best to describe the relationship as it exists and to leave you to draw your conclusions in the light of your own hypotheses about the circumstances in which a severance or attenuation of the Commonwealth link might take place. Since, however, your letter began with a reference to the European Common Market, I should perhaps say that British membership of the E.E.C. seems most unlikely to lead to any serious difficulties with the Ugandans. They would regard the implications pragmatically, i.e. whether Uganda had to pay a material price. As I understand it, the price would be very small and might even be more than compensated by British entry making it easier for the East African territories to obtain an association agreement on acceptable terms. Ugandan preferences in the U.K. are worth only £0.5 million and we have no preferences to lose in Uganda. So with that introduction I shall try to outline our relationship under the three broad headings of Political, Economic and Intangibles and to analyse some of the factors falling in each of these three main fields.

(A) Political

5. There seems to be a not inconsiderable body of opinion in Britain itself and perhaps also in some of the older Commonwealth countries which believes that Britain not only gains nothing from political consultation with Commonwealth countries but actually loses by it because it exposes the British Government to pressures from the newer Commonwealth Members which, but for the existence of Commonwealth gatherings such as the Prime Ministers' Conference, could either be avoided altogether or ignored. These critics would say that the continuance of the Commonwealth in its present political form benefits only its Afro-Asian members and that it could and should be dispensed with tomorrow. This criticism, however, ignores the fact that it must remain a long-term policy of any British Government to seek to maintain friendly relations with the emergent nations in Asia and Africa. This inevitably involves putting up with what seems at times an intolerable degree of immaturity, suspicion and extremism. Even in Uganda, which must rate as an African moderate, or at least a near-moderate, we have seen examples of this over the past year. The answer to these criticisms is that on any racial issue in which Britain is involved, such as Rhodesia, we should find it hard to keep our African critics at arms length whatever the nature of our relationship with them. For instance, even if Uganda was not now in the Commonwealth it would be surprising if Obote did not continue to send his views to H.M.G. if only for the reason that Uganda, as an African country which won independence from the British, feels it natural and expedient to make known her views on other British African issues to her former colonial masters. While it exposes us to considerable vexations it is probably true that the existence of regular Commonwealth political consultation may, on a question like Rhodesia, inhibit to some degree our freedom of manoeuvre both in regard to the substance and more particularly the timing of our policies, for our critics are notoriously impatient. But there is much to be gained in the reverse direction and if 1966 has been a stormy unstable year in Uganda (as also in Nigeria and Ghana) it has also seen the dawning of a more sensible approach to international issues, which we should try to foster by all possible means despite the inevitable frustrations and vexations. We would not achieve this by scrapping the existing Commonwealth channels of communication.

6. I shall turn now to some of the more detailed points in the political field which you enumerated in your letter.

Defence

7. Our present defence relationship is pretty tenuous, quite different from that in Kenya. The Israelis were called in in 1964 to train the Uganda armed forces (Army and Air Force) and our own role has since been pretty marginal e.g. the sale of some military equipment (of which, however, we do not have a monopoly; nor have we received recently any important orders) and provision of training courses in the U.K. Our Military Adviser has very limited access and is indeed treated with suspicion. As regards possible military obligations, it is difficult to foresee the Ugandans needing to invoke our help to resist external aggression. It is, however, just conceivable that in the event of serious internal trouble, e.g. another Army mutiny, the Uganda Government might reluctantly turn to us as they did in 1964. There would, incidentally, be nothing to stop them turning to us in the absence of a Commonwealth relationship, though without a Commonwealth or treaty relationship we should no doubt be even more reluctant to intervene than with one.

United Nations

8. If the Ugandans allow their vote at the U.N. to be influenced at all by the Commonwealth relationship, it must be very marginally. Broadly speaking, they vote as Africans. Occasionally, on matters which do not directly concern them, they may heed our representations, but this is more a product of our bilateral than our Commonwealth relationship. Indirectly, of course, their membership of the Commonwealth does affect their position in the U.N., in the sense that they may be able to speak with greater authority if they can voice the views of the African Commonwealth. They may also become involved in initiatives which would not arise if they were not Commonwealth members, e.g. Obote's co-sponsorship of the oil formula in the Security Council; though I suppose it would have been perfectly possible for us to make use of Obote's relatively moderate stand on this subject even if Uganda were not in the Commonwealth.

Representation

9. There is no doubt that we are the biggest and most influential mission in Uganda. But this depends only partly on the Commonwealth relationship. There are the historical influences and there is the general level of our effort in the political, information and economic fields, especially our role as Uganda's largest aid donor—a role, incidentally, which is becoming relatively more important as other countries are tending to reduce their aid. There would however be nothing to stop us continuing this role outside the Commonwealth relationship if we so wished. This relationship does, however, directly affect the position of this mission to the extent that we are a channel for a considerable volume of information and consultation which would almost certainly be reduced in the absence of the Commonwealth link.

*B. Economic**Trade and investment*

10. It is never very easy to decide whether the British investment and trading position in a newly independent Commonwealth country is to any extent underpinned by the Commonwealth connexion. Habit, confidence, history and traditions are the principal factors here as in so many other aspects of the Commonwealth relationship. The British got here first. They established sound trading concerns, they have always loyally co-operated both with the colonial and independent governments; they are making efforts to train Ugandans; and, above all, over the years, the Ugandan purchasers have been conditioned to British goods and business methods. This is no cause for complacency: the Ugandans have long since discovered the Mercedes and the Volkswagen, as have many expatriates, and our share of the Uganda market as a whole has not unnaturally diminished since Independence. Nevertheless there is no doubt that in the business and investment field, many Ugandans, encouraged by expatriates working in para-statal bodies, still tend to look towards Britain first before going elsewhere, and the Commonwealth connection may be a psychological factor in this. I think that our general economic and trading position here might suffer marginally if Uganda left the Commonwealth, but the damage would be inflicted

not so much by the formal step but by deterioration in British/Ugandan relations which would have preceded it. The economic facts of life in Uganda are such that she could not afford to dispense with Britain, her principal trading partner, though her departure from the Commonwealth might make it easier to put the squeeze on resident British firms and interests. The actual British private investment stake in Uganda as such is of the order of £20 m. Uganda certainly would not be able to expropriate these assets at a fair rate of compensation nor run them herself, and I would therefore think that our investment assets in Uganda, some of which are export-earning, are pretty safe against anything but an extreme contingency such as a Communist take-over of the country. As far as we know, Uganda's cash assets in London only amount to £3.7 m, and the withdrawal of such a small sum or its transfer elsewhere would hardly be damaging to us. Faced with a growing deterioration in their budgetary position, the Ugandans look first to the British banks for support; and it is almost impossible to visualise them carrying on credible financial and economic policies if they severed their links with the sterling area, British financial institutions and the customary Commonwealth consultation on financial questions. It would be hard to see that it would be to our advantage if their financial arrangements, both international and domestic, broke down.

Aid and technical assistance

11. This is a field in which Uganda gains most from her Commonwealth—or at least bilateral—relationship, and the question whether, if she left the Commonwealth, she could continue to look to us for this type of assistance would, of course, depend on a decision by H.M.G. If we were to cut off capital aid and technical assistance in such a contingency, we should undoubtedly benefit our own balance of payments position. We should also be doing damage, almost amounting to the catastrophic, to Uganda's Government machinery particularly in the field of education and various technical services. It would take Uganda many years to recover from a sudden cut off in our technical assistance, since it is impossible to visualise any effective alternative source of supply. It is perhaps hardly profitable to speculate too far along these lines, but it would be safe to say that any decline in Uganda's already creaky administrative services would be damaging to our trading and investment position and would, over the long-term, make it more difficult for us to reconstruct a satisfactory relationship with the country.

C. Intangibles

12. There are still many strong cultural, personal, professional and non-official links between Britain and Uganda and it can truly be said, in many respects, that the intangible links are the closest and probably the most lasting. These links were mostly formed during the Protectorate, but they have continued to thrive very much since, and so long as English remains as the official language in Uganda, as it will for the foreseeable future, these links are likely to increase rather than diminish. Perhaps the strongest factors are the following:

- (a) the large number of British teachers (both school and university) working in Uganda.
- (b) the fact that Uganda citizens and U.K. citizens are not treated as aliens in each

other's countries and the comparatively lenient immigration regulations applied to them.

(c) the recognition in Uganda of most British professional qualifications (e.g. medicine, the law, dentistry, accountancy, architecture, engineering, etc.)

(d) the links between the Churches in Uganda (both Protestant and Roman Catholic) and their parent Churches in Britain; these include the provision of British missionaries (medical and educational, as well as evangelical) for Uganda.

13. It may still be asked whether these links are as valuable to us as they patently are to Uganda. They are in fact the most solid element in our relationship with this country since they are surprisingly hardy and continue quite unaffected by political storms and stresses inside or outside the country. Their effect, like their nature, is rather intangible but they are the best means of projecting British culture and influence over the widest possible areas of the national life and if they were to cease we should ultimately lose a good deal. How far these links would suffer from a break in the Commonwealth relationship would of course depend on the circumstances of the break and the attitudes of both sides thereafter.

Conclusions

14. (a) As with many other newly independent Commonwealth countries the Ugandans regard the Commonwealth link as largely Anglo-centric. A decision by them in present circumstances to leave the Commonwealth would probably therefore be an at least partial rejection of the long-standing and pervasive British connection. It would probably succeed a period of acute embitterment of political relations, which would already have affected our position to a substantial degree.

(b) If, despite frustrations and vexations, the aim of H.M.G. is to seek to maintain in the long-term good relations with Uganda and other Commonwealth countries, the Commonwealth connection, with its periodical political consultations, provides the best means of keeping in touch and for encouraging moderation.

(c) But the effort we make in cultivating Uganda must in the last analysis be a measure of her importance to us. Without the Commonwealth link, we would probably still reckon that much at least of this effort was justified by our historical ties and present bilateral affiliations.

(d) The existence of the Commonwealth has only a marginal effect on British trade and investment in Uganda, but provides some psychological support for the British position.

(e) To cut off all aid and technical assistance would do grave damage to Uganda and such damage would, in the long-term, be to our disadvantage.

(f) The intangibles are possibly the strongest links of all. They are of direct benefit to Uganda, and, if cut off, would also drastically reduce the projection of Britain and British ideals in this country. Some of the most important of these intangibles are, however, virtually indestructible: Uganda has, for example, no alternative to relying on the English language, especially for secondary school education which they are trying to expand at an almost frenzied pace.³

³ Signed by M Preston, first secretary at the high commission, in the absence of the deputy high commissioner.

260 FCO 49/153, no 2

26 Jan 1967

[The Commonwealth as a British interest]: letter from E N Larmour¹ (Lagos) to R Walker on the view from Nigeria

I am sorry we are so late in replying to your letter 2 PLA/39/41/30 of 9 November about 'The Commonwealth as a British interest'.² I hope you may feel that the series of crises which has been convulsing Nigeria may, to some extent, excuse us from neglecting more routine, though important tasks. At the time when we got your letter it looked very much as if the Nigeria of the past was about to break up into two or more separate sovereign states. Even now the continued existence of a Federal Nigeria, except in the loosest sense, must still be seriously in doubt. However, for the purpose of your exercise we must assume that we shall be dealing with a country which, however loosely federated, will in fact correspond roughly to what we now know as Nigeria.

2. Perhaps I might start by trying to identify and define some Nigerian attitudes towards the Commonwealth. To the majority of Nigerians the word Commonwealth means practically nothing and few of those who do know what it is have any very strong views on its value as an institution (even though they themselves may be strongly pro- or anti-British). The people who count are fully aware of the economic benefits accruing to Nigeria from Commonwealth preferences in the British market, which I shall discuss in detail later on, but apart from this it is hard to identify more than a vague feeling that the Commonwealth as such is a 'good thing'. There is some, admittedly rather woolly, appreciation of the Commonwealth as a world-wide multi-racial association which has a role to play in an age where racialism is becoming increasingly a threat to peace. And, perhaps subconsciously, the feeling that co-membership of the Commonwealth in some way makes respectable a relationship between Britain and Nigeria which might otherwise be felt to be unbearably neo-colonialist. But there is also a feeling among some of the more radical Nigerians that membership of the Commonwealth has acted as something of a check on a more full-blooded Nigerian commitment to 'African unity'. But the growing evidence of Africa's inherent instability during the past year has probably weakened this feeling, and it is possible that interest in the Commonwealth may now gain a new lease of life and may indeed come to be seen as a sort of sheet anchor in an uncertain world. Some evidence of such a trend is provided by the wide, and growing demand for 'Commonwealth Today'. Officials in the Ministry of External Affairs like the idea of the Commonwealth, and attach importance to Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meetings, and not merely because they provide an opportunity to pressurize the British. Both Ironsi in his day, and Gowon³ more recently, have, presumably on the advice of M.E.A. but probably also reflecting their own views, spoken in the warmest terms of the Commonwealth connection. The Commonwealth has in fact become rather a habit to Nigerians. They are now accustomed to attending Commonwealth meetings from P.M. level downwards and have generally made a useful contribution, and have themselves benefitted from taking part. But, like most of the newer members, they are probably more concerned about what they can get out of it than what they put in: and if it appeared to cease to serve their interests, they would have no sentimental reluctance to see it break up.

3. Turning now to specific issues:—

¹ Minister, UK High Commission, Nigeria, 1964–1967 (see 157).

² See 250.

³ See 372, note 1.

(a) *The Commonwealth as a whole*

Nigeria's foreign policy is based, like that of other countries, on a realistic appreciation of her own self-interest. Up to now this has meant a posture of non-aligned alignment with the West. On issues affecting Commonwealth countries outside Africa, e.g. Indonesian confrontation of Malaysia and the Chinese invasion of India, the Nigerians have had little difficulty in siding, if somewhat unobtrusively, with the Commonwealth country concerned and I think that they could be expected to give at least moral support to Commonwealth countries should similar situations arise in the future. Such decisions are easily made. Much more important is the degree to which Nigeria feels she has responsibilities towards the Commonwealth as such, especially when it comes to issues such as Rhodesia and South Africa. In the past they have certainly been prepared to expose themselves to criticism in defence of the Commonwealth and even of Britain, e.g. Sir Abubakar's summoning of a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting in Lagos in January 1966. And I believe that at the recent Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London, Nigerian influence, though for obvious reasons less effective than in the past, was directed towards discouraging possible impulsive moves by some of the more radical member states to quit the Commonwealth over Rhodesia.

You ask whether a reduced British political and economic effort in the Commonwealth would influence the attitude of the Nigerian Government to it. The answer to this is, I think, that Nigeria's attitude *to us* will be influenced by the political and, much more important, economic effort we are prepared to make in Nigeria itself; but that their view of the Commonwealth as such is unlikely to be much affected by any such trend. Indeed it is quite possible that signs of British disenchantment and disengagement might provoke the Nigerians to more active policies directed to the preservation of the association. In the Ministry of External Affairs there is, as elsewhere, a feeling that the Commonwealth has hitherto been too Anglocentric, and they would like to see it continue to develop in such a way that Britain became 'just another member'. This would in some ways be a healthy development; but not necessarily in our interests.

As for British membership of the European Communities, Nigeria is clearly in a special position, having herself reached agreement with the E.E.C.;⁴ and there would be no disposition here to argue that any British move towards Europe would weaken the Commonwealth. After all, no-one dares to object to African Commonwealth countries being members of the O.A.U., nor indeed to some of them putting the cause of African unity before the interests of the Commonwealth. And most Nigerians would conclude (if they thought of it at all) that we had given too much weight to purely Commonwealth considerations in assessing the pros and cons of our earlier application for membership of the E.E.C.

(b) *Representation*

The British High Commission is no doubt the best-informed Mission here and I suppose we could be said to have a greater influence than most. The Nigerians tend to think of us first (though they do not always turn to us) when they need some

⁴ In July 1966 Nigeria signed a treaty of association with the EEC, the first Commonwealth country to do so. Its provisions on free trade resembled those included in the Yaoundé Convention (see 376, note 3). It made no provision for aid.

outside advice or expertise. This is mainly due to the very close relationship of the immediate past: but the fact that it continues is I believe very largely due to our common membership of the Commonwealth. Our influence in almost every Commonwealth country tends, generally speaking, to be stronger than for example our influence in Burma,⁵ the only former member of the old Empire which opted out of the Commonwealth on becoming independent. I believe that had Burma remained a member of the Commonwealth, British influence could and would have been exerted in a way that might at least have retarded the decline of what was at one time one of the most prosperous countries in South East Asia. Our former dependencies have always had the closest links, educationally, financially and commercially with the mother country and there is a natural tendency for these links to continue, though perhaps not quite so closely. We have the advantage of familiarity with the governmental set-up of the new countries; we are often invited to advise them in a way that few foreign countries could bring themselves to do, and, in the early days of independence at least, we have a much closer and more informal relationship with Commonwealth than with most foreign Governments. Thus the Ministry of External Affairs and other Government Departments are prepared to handle business with the Commonwealth Missions in a less formal way than they are with those of foreign countries; in theory, at least, only Commonwealth countries are allowed to use 'demiofficial letters' in conducting business with the Ministry of External Affairs, and similar privileges are extended for arranging appointments with senior officials. But such minor courtesies are largely a matter of personal relations, and I do not think the Americans or the Germans, for example, would feel that this gives us any particular advantages over them. Nevertheless we have a head start as the former colonial power, though this works both ways; we know from other Missions here that there *are* officials who make no secret of their anti-British views, and some Missions may be able to make a bit of capital out of knocking us. But on the whole, I believe that, at the present stage at least, the advantages of Commonwealth membership in this, as in many other fields, far outweigh the disadvantages.

(c) *Disputes*

It is highly probable that relations between Nigeria and Ghana in Nkrumah's day would have been a good deal worse, or differences would have been brought much more into the public eye, had they not both been members of the Commonwealth. In spite of their mutual suspicions, there was always something of a family feeling that prevented a more permanent estrangement. And on the major intra-Commonwealth dispute I believe that the fact that Rhodesia has hitherto been handled within the Commonwealth has been on balance an advantage to Britain. It is true that we have been subjected to very great pressures from our African Commonwealth friends and it is even arguable that we would have been able to resist African pressures far more effectively outside the Commonwealth. But the fact that Rhodesia has been so fully and exhaustively discussed in successive Commonwealth Conferences and Committees has led to a greater understanding of the problems with which it confronts Britain and although we have been subjected to serious and often unfair pressures, we for our part have also been able to exert counter pressures which have

⁵ Larmour joined the Burma Civil Service in 1942 and was deputy secretary to the governor in 1947.

had a moderating effect on the policies of at least some of the African Commonwealth Governments.

(d) *Defence*

Suspicious of British military intentions are probably stronger here than in most other ex-Colonial territories; many Nigerians seem genuinely to believe that we would jump at a chance of re-colonizing the country. This attitude of suspicion and distrust existed even before the January coup and of course became much stronger during the days of Ibo dominance between January and July. But even in the time of Abubakar's Government there was a tendency to wish to cut the defence painter. This was partly political and designed to preserve their public posture of non-alignment. But much of the desire to draw apart is attributable to the personal and highly malevolent interest of the then Minister of Defence and Treasurer of the N.P.C., the late Alhaji Ribadu, who had a pathological dislike of Britain and things British dating back to colonial days. He no doubt had the subsidiary motive of wanting to get rid of British officers and British methods and standards from the Armed Forces so that he could the more easily introduce his own methods of, for example, purchases of equipment which would yield dividends to himself and to his party funds.

The history of the 1961 Anglo-Nigerian Defence Treaty⁶ is symptomatic of the relationships which have existed since 1960. The treaty was signed in 1961 but was subsequently abrogated by mutual agreement as a result of political pressures. But although there is no formal defence agreement, it is probably true to say that most of the Military Governors, including Gowon, believe in their heart of hearts that British military units are ready to move to Nigeria at their request; and it is very widely assumed that, if Nigeria needed military help, they would turn to Britain who would immediately respond. In this context the Commonwealth is mentioned as an afterthought; as little more than a face saving cover for what would in any event be a painful blow to national pride.

(e) *United Nations*

The primary Nigerian objective in the United Nations is to exert a moderating influence in the counsels of the Afro-Asian bloc; but as seen from here this sometimes means that in the end they go along with the more vociferous rabble for fear of being dubbed Western stooges. Nevertheless I believe that while Nigeria's interests must come first and her relations with other African Governments must be of the highest importance to her, her membership of the Commonwealth for a variety of reasons leads her to think at least twice before voting against Britain on major issues. This was fairly well established in the Security Council proceedings on Rhodesia last month when it is evident that Chief Adebo,⁷ in spite of his own strong emotions about Rhodesia, did a great deal behind the scenes to try to restrain the extremists. In the event, both Nigeria and Uganda, despite reservations and despite a good deal of contortions over the African amendments, voted for the resolution as agreed at the Prime Ministers' Conference.

(f) *Technical assistance*

When people speak of the Commonwealth relationship in this context it should always be remembered that they are in fact using a kind of shorthand. What is

⁶ See Martin Lynn, ed, *Nigeria*, part II, chapt 12.

⁷ Nigerian representative at UN.

important—sometimes helpfully, sometimes to our embarrassment—is not the relationship itself but the historical processes which have resulted in the former British dependent territories in Africa being now independent members of the Commonwealth.

These countries retained at independence a substantial legacy of British institutions, British methods of work, British administrative and professional models, British commercial interests and in many cases considerable numbers of British personnel. This legacy is not one that they or the intellectuals at any rate always like:—but with the rest of their past it is a legacy which neither they nor we can avoid and the result is often that whether they like it or not, they have little choice but to look to Britain for many types of aid and technical assistance. Similar, but much weaker, ties exist between developing countries like Nigeria and other members of the Commonwealth, e.g. the Gambia, more or less in proportion to the extent to which these other members were involved in the advancement and emergence of former Colonial territories to independent nationhood.

The association between Britain and the new countries of Africa which were formerly British might, therefore, from this point of view, not change all that much if these new countries were not members of the Commonwealth—provided, of course, that departure from the Commonwealth were not caused by particular antagonisms or particular irreconcilable interests. We should still be in the aid business—because, if you like, we can't get out of it; they would still be in a position of having to ask us because in many fields no one else is as well placed to provide assistance. But there is also the feeling, on both sides, that newly independent countries need, expect, and should receive more from us *because* they are members of the Commonwealth than if they had 'gone foreign'.

Indeed, aid and technical assistance are of quite significant importance to the Commonwealth relationship. They are among the subjects which are constantly discussed between members of the Commonwealth and which constantly therefore provide a focus and a forum in which the developed and the developing countries can talk on matters of mutual concern. All the myriad professional conferences between Commonwealth members—Commonwealth education conferences, Commonwealth finance conferences, Commonwealth medical conferences, etc.—are in fact about aid and technical assistance, although these gatherings provide occasions when developed and developing countries meet on allegedly equal terms. Not only are the conferences themselves important to the Commonwealth relationship; they are both the mainspring of the continuing widespread professional contacts—the professional 'old boy' network of the Commonwealth—and the occasions on which this network is most conspicuously brought into the public view. No doubt such conferences would still be held even if aid and technical assistance were not under discussion; but they would attract much less interest and would become politically very much less significant.

(g) *Private investment*

According to the latest Central Bank figures, at the end of 1964 British investment accounted for £181.4 million out of £321.2 million of foreign investment—i.e. 56%. The rate of future investment primarily depends, not on the Commonwealth connection, but on Nigeria's political stability and economic promise. Unless the ending of the Commonwealth relationship were to compel Nigeria to take

retaliatory measures against Britain—which seems unlikely—I cannot see that the ending of the relationship would in itself affect the flow of British private investment into this country, assuming, of course, that the Sterling Area continued in existence. But there must inevitably be a feeling amongst investors that because of the frequent interchange of information on financial and fiscal policy between them, Commonwealth Governments are less likely than foreign Governments to take ill-advised or unilateral action which might be inimical to investors' interests.

(h) *Capital aid*

It is difficult, for me at least, to say what has been the prime motive for our capital aid effort here: a useful adjunct to strengthen our political influence; desire to help a backward country (and by its development stabilise it politically and make it a better market); a desire to help a backward Commonwealth country, because of the sentimental and practical needs of following up the former colonial relationship; a desire to keep up the level of our exports to a still partly 'captive' market; or a mixture of all these, with one or the other factor predominant at different times. Anyway, the result is that we have given, or have firm commitments to give, some £40 million of capital aid to Nigeria since independence, with another £10 million being on conditional offer.

We know that, for economic reasons, it is anyway difficult for Britain to sustain this rate of capital aid to Nigeria. And Nigeria's own economy will—assuming the country does not disintegrate—soon be transformed by its mineral oil riches. So the odds are that our capital aid effort to Nigeria will tend to tail off, regardless of what happens to the Commonwealth, and that this tailing off of aid will probably not—because of her own latent resources and early benefit from oil—in itself be unduly detrimental to Nigeria's stability or economic development.

(i) *Special Commonwealth links on economic matters*

There are a number of periodic Commonwealth meetings, such as of Finance Ministers and officials, or conferences on communication or aviation matters. There are some special Commonwealth agreements, e.g. on postal matters. And above all, there is the Sterling Area. Nigeria generally is a willing participant in all these fields. The end of the Commonwealth relationship would mean the immediate or early demise of many such links, though not perhaps the Sterling Area; and they would tend to be replaced by wider international links, where Britain's influence would inevitably be diluted. It is difficult to quantify the value to Britain of these links in financial terms, but their general effect is to orientate Nigerian Government Departments etc., to Britain which tends to be taken as the model for the running of most Nigerian public services. The ending of the Commonwealth relationship would perhaps strike more painfully here than anywhere else on the economic side.

(j) *Benefit of Commonwealth relationship to British trade with Nigeria*

Nigeria has strong trade links with Britain. In 1965, 31% (£85 million) of Nigeria's imports came from Britain, and 38% (£102.6 million) of Nigeria's exports went to Britain. Nigeria gives no preferences to Britain; but Britain gives Nigeria preferences on her exports of agricultural produce (though not on her increasingly important

exports of crude petroleum), so that in 1965 about 30% of Nigerian exports to Britain enjoyed preferential treatment.

The Nigerians undoubtedly recognise that the preferences which they obtain in the United Kingdom on their exports of oil seeds, vegetable oils, plywood and to a lesser extent cocoa, have a substantial value to them. Nevertheless, it would be going too far to say that there is any particular feeling of gratitude or reciprocal obligation to Britain on this account. On the contrary, Nigeria was perfectly prepared, in pursuance of a quite legitimate desire to safeguard her position in the Common Market, to enter recently into an agreement with the E.E.C. whereby Britain, and others, are discriminated against (although so far in token fashion) and the E.E.C. is granted privileged treatment.

The existence of the British Empire favoured British trade with Nigeria. But except insofar as we are still drawing on the advantages which history has given us here, our trade currently does not owe anything to the Commonwealth relationship. The ending of this relationship would, presumably, also entail the ending of Commonwealth preference. This would hurt, and annoy, Nigeria. But, in my assessment, Nigeria has too much at stake in the way of commercial and economic ties with Britain to resort to any form of retaliation on this account. The Nigerians are realists in trade matters. The end of the Commonwealth relationship should not thus have detrimental effects on our trade with this country.

(k) *Non-official relationships and the intangibles*

The Nigerian branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society is virtually moribund, and such links as there are with other Commonwealth countries tend to be bilateral rather than multilateral. There has for example been a marked increase in the number of Nigerians visiting Australia. Such links might decline if the Commonwealth ceased to exist, but there is no reason to suppose that there would be any serious effect on links with Britain, so many of which, in the fields of education and law for example, have little to do with the Commonwealth as such.

4. My conclusion from all this is that our interests would indeed suffer, though perhaps not so drastically as all that, if the Commonwealth as we know it were to disappear completely. But the preservation of our purely British interests does not entirely depend on the Commonwealth relationship as such: it depends as much or more on the pattern of the relations between the former colonial power and the newly independent country. But that kind of influence is often transitory and the Commonwealth relationship is one method by which links which might otherwise become moribund can be kept alive. The more the Commonwealth grows and the greater the numbers of the less mature countries, the less can the Commonwealth expect to wield any concerted political influence. But that is not in itself a bad thing; one of the chief values of the Commonwealth is the opportunity it affords for close and continuing consultation over the whole field of inter-Governmental relationships. Over this field each Government can and does influence others. For the moment we continue to play a leading role and this I imagine we shall continue to do in the immediate future. Even in years to come when we no longer wish to be seen to be in the driving seat, we shall still, by virtue of our greater experience, have the chance of exercising a moderating influence and one that is in our own British interests. That in itself seems to me to be a sufficient reason for trying to preserve the Commonwealth in something like its present form.

261 FCO 49/78, no 1

26 Jan 1967

'Australian attitudes towards the monarchy': letter from Sir C Johnston (Canberra) to Sir S Garner. *Enclosure*

You sent me a copy of your letter of 18 May last to Henry Lintott,¹ about Canadian attitudes towards the Monarchy, and said that you would welcome any comments from me on the position in Australia.

2. I am sorry that we have been such a long time in reacting to your request. It is an important and delicate subject, and in order to get the emphasis right we needed time for thought and consultation with heads of posts. Then the visit of President Johnson loomed up, and it obviously made sense to take another look at the subject after that. We have now just had our yearly meeting of heads of posts in Canberra, which gave us an opportunity for final discussion with them.

3. As a result I am now enclosing a memorandum which I think summarises the position today as accurately as we can.

4. I am sending copies of this letter to the High Commissioners in Ottawa and Wellington.

Enclosure to 261

In trying to analyse Australian attitudes to the Monarchy, we need to distinguish between the Australians' view of the institution, and their attitude to members of the Royal Family collectively and individually.

2. The attitude of individual Australians to the Monarchy as an institution varies according to their age, occupation, descent, and the area in which they live. In the less populous or geographically remote States (Western Australia and Tasmania in particular), loyalty to the Throne retains much of its pre-war fervour and is still taken as a matter of course. In the Armed Forces everywhere loyalty is professed and is, I am sure, widely and sincerely felt. In civilian life the Returned Servicemen's League is an influential centre of loyal feeling. Older people, particularly those of British descent and Protestant religion, feel a strong and emotional attachment to the Throne. In contrast with this is the relative indifference shown by younger people, particularly in the big cities. With the Holt Government firmly established in its own right, and the new relationship with the United States of America publicly established and endorsed, the Monarchy in Australia can now, perhaps, be seen in detachment and tested against these generalisations.

3. There is also the aspect of Australia's own search for a national identity. Until the beginning of the last war most inhabitants of this country did not regard themselves primarily as 'Australian'. They felt an intense, often parochial loyalty to their own State, town or district. Apart from that, the majority regarded themselves, with pride, as 'British'. A sizeable minority, particularly in New South Wales and Victoria, felt themselves to be 'Irish'.

4. The Monarchy was then seen as a symbol of Australia's 'British' status. Its supporters supported it fervently on this account; its opponents opposed it equally fervently on the same grounds.

¹ Sir H Lintott, UK high commissioner in Canada, 1963–1968 (cf 270).

5. Traces of these attitudes still exist though most of the fire has gone from the argument. As in Britain, openly expressed loyalty to the Monarchy is no longer universally fashionable; while, on the other side, the wrongs of Ireland are fading into history. It is, however, probably still true that the Monarch is seen here, not so much as 'Queen of Australia' or even 'Queen of Britain', but as 'Queen of the British'—a term which many, but by no means all, Australians regard as comprehending themselves. (The term 'Head of the Commonwealth' has little meaning. Australians, on the whole, do not think highly of a multiracial Commonwealth.)

6. There is, however, a new factor: the rise of a genuine and specifically Australian nationalism. The war, with the traumatic effect of the fall of Singapore and consequent direct threat to the Australian mainland; the necessary exercise of independent foreign and commercial policies since the war; and, perhaps most important, the great increase in travel both overseas and within Australia itself, have contributed to this. Recent political developments, notably our stricter implementation of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act; our moves to join the Common Market; Vietnam, where for the first time Australia is involved in fighting beside the United States and without Britain; and Rhodesia, where many Australians feel an instinctive affinity with the white settlers—all have hastened this process by suggesting that the Mother Country and the Australian 'British' were gradually moving apart.

7. Those Australians who are conscious of their new national status do not always regard the Monarchy in its present form as an appropriate national symbol. A Head of State based 12,000 miles away is felt to be too remote. There are also seen to be practical inconveniences. Australia is working hard to develop a special relationship with her neighbours in Asia, but is unable to repay the visits from their Heads of State by sending in return a Head of State identifiably her own. There have been one or two instances where Her Majesty's role as Queen of Britain has been thought to be in conflict with Her role as Sovereign of Australia. The issue by the Queen of the British General Service Medal to Australians serving in Vietnam is one example. Particular stress is laid by some opponents of the Monarchy on the view that it is delaying for the Australian public the 'shock of recognition' of Australia's position as an independent and possibly unprotected country isolated on the edge of Asia.

8. Views such as these are at present held in a clearly thought-out form only by a very small, but articulate, minority of intellectuals. They may, however, be reflected among the mass of the third and fourth generation Australians in the big cities who vaguely feel that the Monarchy is an expensive anachronism and nothing very much to do with them anyway. Some of the so-called 'New Australians'—migrants from Europe, of whom more than 1,200,000 have come to Australia since the war—are said to resent having to swear an oath of allegiance to a 'British Queen' before they can become legally Australian.

9. There are also some powerful arguments on the other side. Perhaps the strongest is the desire to attract as many British migrants as possible to settle in Australia. The fact that they will be settling in a country where they can keep their allegiance to The Queen is thought to contribute to their decision to come here. In any referendum on the subject of the Monarchy the 1,300,000 post-war migrants from Britain would more than outnumber the migrants from other parts of Europe.

10. Another, peculiarly Australian, consideration is the extent to which the Monarchy, through the State Governors, is felt to preserve the rights of the still technically 'sovereign' States.² This is probably of diminishing importance, except perhaps in Western Australia and Queensland. There is considerable criticism, mainly on grounds of expense, of the institution of State Governors though this is mitigated when an outstandingly popular man is holding the job—as in the case of Sir Henry Abel Smith in Queensland.

11. Attitudes to the Monarchy as an institution are not the same as attitudes to members of the Royal Family collectively and as individuals. There is still generally a warm and friendly interest, not however unmixed with criticism. Some rather tasteless cartoons in newspapers and satirical sketches on television have been appearing. During the later years of his Prime Ministership, Sir Robert Menzies, who was personally identified in Australian eyes with the Royal Family, was becoming unpopular in many quarters and some of his unpopularity may have affected the 'image' of Royalty. On the other hand, the television programmes, the women's pages and magazines seem to be as full of reports of Royal happenings as are their equivalents in Britain. Portraits of The Queen are to be found in schools throughout the country and in many public offices. Loyal Societies, ranging from the Victoria League to the Boy Scouts, are still active, within their limitations. Most Australians still feel sincere affection and respect for Her Majesty.

12. Public response to Royal tours and visits varies according to their nature. Formal tours accompanied by ceremonial, with Royal visitors seen only in the distance, were enjoyed by Sir Robert Menzies and those in the upper echelons of Government and society; but some of the arrangements for them have been widely criticised on the grounds of expense, over-formality, the 'unreality' of the Australia shown to the visitors, and disruption of traffic. On the other hand, 'working visits' such as those paid by H.R.H. Prince Philip, are not only not criticised, but positively welcomed. When one of the younger members of the Royal family comes to Australia and is seen to be enjoying himself (or herself) here there is especial gratification. Outstanding successes have been the visit of H.R.H. Princess Alexandra in 1959, and the recent visit by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. The decision, reportedly taken at his own request, that the Prince of Wales should spend a second term at Geelong,³ pleased even those Australians normally indifferent to Royalty, and relaxed, informal photographs of His Royal Highness on holiday in New Guinea and the Eastern States made an excellent impression. The Queen Mother has her own special place in the hearts of most Australians.

13. *The Future*: President Johnson's visit in October 1966 gave the Australians for the first time an opportunity to see for themselves the Head of a major State who is also a politician. There can be no doubt that many of them liked what they saw: President Johnson's mixture of majesty and campaigning folksiness was something quite new to Australians and had great impact. His apparent lack of respect for

² Then, as now, and by convention, state governors in Australia are appointed by royal warrant. State premiers consult their Cabinets before advising the monarch. Legally the monarch can appoint without consultation but this would break the convention. For clarification on this issue the editors are grateful to Professor Carl Bridge.

³ From Feb to July 1966 Prince Charles spent two terms at Timbertop, an annexe of Melbourne's Geelong Church of England Grammar School in the mountains 100 miles north of the city.

timing and protocol (and his consequent readiness to keep dignitaries waiting in order that he could chat with ordinary men and women in the crowd), were contrasted with the formality and rigid timing of some Royal tours. The visit also enabled Australians to envisage for themselves what it might be like to have a President, instead of a Governor-General and a (usually absent) Sovereign. On the whole, impressed though they were, the Australians were in no way convinced that republicanism was the right solution for them. Nor can it be said that Mr. Holt's sweeping victory at the recent general election was in any way an endorsement of republicanism: the subject was not at issue politically.

14. The same is likely to be true for the immediate future. None of the political parties at present forming the Government or Opposition in the State or Federal legislatures has republicanism in its platform. Any change in the Australian constitution would involve a referendum and it is extremely unlikely that an affirmative vote for ending the Monarchy will be a possibility for some time to come unless brought on by some action by Britain interpreted by Australians as a final rejection.

15. Even if this did happen one day, the selection or election of a Head of State in an Australian republic would be difficult. The Australians pride themselves on not being respecters of persons, particularly their own fellow-countrymen. Their very irreverent attitude to politicians suggests that it might be difficult for them to accept a local politician as a ceremonial president. They have no generally-recognised aristocracy from which to select a non-political Head of State. They have accepted retired Australian Service chiefs and judges as State Governors and even Governors-General, but the field is very limited. The Monarchy as an element of dignity, stability and continuity would be hard to replace.

16. We must, however, expect a gradual introduction of more specifically Australian national symbols. There will certainly be pressure to ensure that future Governors-General (but not necessarily all State Governors) will be Australians, although an exception would always be made for a member of the Royal Family. Use of the Union flag beside the Australian National flag on public occasions may possibly decrease. There is already pressure for a specifically Australian National Anthem.

17. A recent book, 'Australia and the Monarchy', edited by Geoffrey Dutton⁴ (a prominent republican), has a final chapter by Peter Coleman, Editor of the traditionally republican Sydney weekly, 'The Bulletin', entitled 'The Phoney Debate'. Mr. Coleman's final paragraph is worth quoting in full:

'The significant republicans and monarchists have so much in common with and respect for each other—since both are Australians and nationalists first and foremost—that their fundamental differences are matters of detail and timing. They see no reason why they should mess up their understanding and tolerance, let alone why they should mess up Australia, by introducing dated foreign ideologies. They will surely see to it that the republican-monarchist debate does not become a real issue until the decision that will have to be made seems an obvious and natural one, involving the minimum of crisis. Otherwise, they will both have failed.'

⁴ Geoffrey Dutton, *Australia and the monarchy: a symposium* (Melbourne, 1966).

262 FCO 49/153, no 3

14 Feb 1967

'The Commonwealth as a British interest': letter from D A Scott¹**(New Delhi) to R Walker on the view from India****[Extract]**

In my letter of 22 December I promised to let you have our contribution to this exercise as soon as possible.² I now enclose it, with apologies that we have taken so long.

2. Our paper presents what is in many ways a rather depressing picture. India, whose accession to the old Commonwealth transformed that association and seemed to be opening up new prospects of inter-racial co-operation, did not, in the event, evolve a Commonwealth conscience or consciousness. In an interview on 17 January, 1967, Mrs. Gandhi³ told reporters that the Indian Government were not thinking of breaking with the Commonwealth. But she went on to say: 'The Commonwealth is a forum where you can exchange views and something like that. The only value it could have had was in the economic field, but that too is not functioning . . . I don't really see [in the Commonwealth] any value except that the more the links, the more people can talk together on their problems. This always helps in keeping peace and understanding. So, from that point of view, it is a good thing. I don't really see it achieving anything more'. Very faint praise indeed. But I fear that, in the case of India at least, the concluding parenthetical supposition in paragraph 5 of your letter of 9 November is further from the mark than you hope.

3. In that letter you invited us to draw your attention to relevant earlier correspondence. I think the following are the most important:—

- (a) the High Commissioner's Despatch No. 29 of 3 September, 1965, on 'India's View of Britain and the Commonwealth';
- (b) Waterfield's⁴ letter PL 118/11 of 20 October, 1966, about Indian reactions to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting; and, especially,
- (c) the High Commissioner's letter PL 5/25/1 of 30 August, 1966, to Sir Saville Garner on 'India and the Commonwealth'.

4. I am sending copies of this letter and its enclosure to the Chanceries at Colombo and Rawalpindi, and also to Tony Duff.

Enclosure to 262**(A) *The Commonwealth as a whole***

India views her membership of the Commonwealth mainly as an aspect of her bilateral relations with Britain. The concept of the Commonwealth as a multi-racial association of free and equal nations plays little or no part in considerations of India's foreign policy (though for a time, and for his own purposes, it held considerable attractions for Nehru). Thus India today is not at all 'Commonwealth-minded'.

¹ CRO from 1948; deputy high commissioner, Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1961–1963; deputy high commissioner, India, 1965–1967; high commissioner to Uganda and non-resident ambassador, Rwanda, 1967–1970; assistant under-secretary of state, FCO, 1970–1972; high commissioner to New Zealand and governor of Pitcairn Island, 1973–1975; ambassador to South Africa, 1976–1979.

² See 250.

³ Indira Gandhi, prime minister of India, 1966–1977, 1980–Nov 1984 (assassinated).

⁴ J P Waterfield, counsellor and head of Chancery, New Delhi, 1966–1968.

2. It follows that membership of the Commonwealth has no significant influence on Indian foreign policy: the likely effect on the Commonwealth of any particular action is simply not one of the considerations affecting Indian behaviour. This is not to say that India does not—fitfully—see some value in her membership of the Commonwealth; but she sees this value mainly as a means of enabling her to gang up with others in exerting influence on British policies. This attitude has its roots in the Indian belief that the Commonwealth is essentially a British club, designed to perpetuate Britain's imperial sphere of influence; that India did Britain a great favour by joining the Commonwealth (against many expectations at the time); and that Britain is consequently beholden to India. British friendship and support can therefore be taken for granted, leaving India free to concentrate on winning friends elsewhere. This feeling that the Commonwealth is designed for Britain's benefit gives rise to a nagging fear that it is not an entirely respectable organisation for so prominent a champion of the underdeveloped nations as India to belong to, and sharpens the urge to demonstrate in public India's opposition to 'colonialism'. It is thus arguable that India's membership of the Commonwealth inclines her to more extreme public postures on colonial issues than she might otherwise choose to adopt.

3. On the fairly frequent occasions when demands for India's withdrawal from the Commonwealth are voiced in the Indian Parliament, they appear to be stimulated less by disillusionment about the practical value to India of her membership than by disapproval of some specific aspect of British policy, real or imagined. The position taken up by Indian Ministers generally is that 'India has no present intention of leaving the Commonwealth'. But they are never heard to speak, in this context, favourably of the Commonwealth as an institution or association or of the U.K.'s position in it.

4. India thus views her Commonwealth connection in the context of her general relationship with Britain. She undoubtedly values the opportunities which membership affords her of exerting influence over other Commonwealth countries, especially in Africa, where her standing leaves much to be desired. (At the same time Indians often find it difficult to conceal their contempt for African attitudes and policies.) Lacking the automatic prominence in the Afro-Asian world once guaranteed for her by Nehru's personal stature, India is glad to keep a relatively friendly international forum in which to expound her views. The Indians were, for example, well satisfied with the last Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting in September, because they felt it had provided an opportunity for India to re-assume her rightful dominant position in the Afro-Asian caucus.

5. India has also found some value in the Commonwealth connection when appealing for economic aid to Canada and, to a lesser degree, Australia and New Zealand, and in lobbying in ECAFE and UNCTAD. In approaches of this kind the Commonwealth connection is incidental, but useful.

6. Several Ministers and many responsible officials are of course aware of the material advantages which India derives from Commonwealth membership. But there are no indications that Indian Ministers attach real significance to the Commonwealth as an association—certainly not to the extent of defending India's membership in public—nor that they accept that membership and its benefits impose on India any obligations of any kind. Counter-claims from Commonwealth countries carry no extra weight derived from the fact of common membership; she is, for instance, more sensitive towards the U.A.R., Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union than to any of her Commonwealth colleagues, including Britain. This is not because

India thinks Britain is unimportant, but because she thinks that Britain is beholden to India and morally 'one down' as the former colonial ruler. Britain is therefore in no position to criticise India, nor even to resent Indian criticism. Experience has shown that she can be taken for granted.

7. As explained, the Indians see some political merit in the Commonwealth as a forum for the presentation of their own views. A 'reduced British political effort' in the Commonwealth, therefore, might not be unwelcome to the extent that such a development strengthened the hand of the Afro-Asian members, among whom India would expect to play a leading role. A reduction in *economic* effort would certainly be unwelcome; but by and large India views the economic assistance which she receives from Britain—and other aid-giving members of the Commonwealth—as a bilateral matter, and nothing to do with the Commonwealth as such. A reduced British economic effort in the Commonwealth, therefore, inasmuch as it hurt India, would directly and adversely affect Indo-British relations; only indirectly—though certainly adversely—would it affect India's attitude to the Commonwealth.

8. A closer relationship between Britain and the European Economic Community would undoubtedly be regarded as diluting the value and strength of the Commonwealth. Nonetheless it is probably true to say that most responsible Indian officials, commentators, and politicians increasingly accept—with varying degrees of anxiety—that this is, sooner or later, the natural and inevitable direction for Britain to take. Indian attitudes to Britain joining the E.E.C. would depend greatly on the extent to which such a move would affect the present system of Commonwealth trade and tariff preferences. In the short term, and depending on arrangements for trade preferences either for India or developing countries in general, reactions would be unfavourable; but it is conceivable that a prospering Britain in a strong E.E.C. could establish a healthier and more realistic relationship with India, and could attract back a little of the respect which India currently accords to the Soviet Union.

9. After the last Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting, the Secretary (I) in the Ministry of External Affairs is reliably reported to have briefed his officials on the following lines:—

- (a) although the Commonwealth had not broken up at the Meeting, it was manifestly a declining organisation. However, while it lasted the Commonwealth did have certain benefits for India, particularly in the field of trade preferences;
- (b) Britain would almost certainly sooner or later join the E.E.C., where her real national interests lay;
- (c) as Britain ceased to think of herself as a World Power and began to concentrate on Europe, her interest in maintaining good relations with India would decline and she might therefore become less prepared to defer to the Indian point of view. . . .

263 FCO 49/155, no 8 15 Feb 1967
 'Value of the Commonwealth to Britain': letter from Sir P Gore-Booth
 to Sir S Garner on the draft of a Commonwealth Office paper

[Following the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in Sept 1966 (see 217, note 4, and 254), ministers decided, after a long enough period had elapsed, that it would be

desirable to review British interests in relation to the future of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Office prepared a draft in Jan 1967. It was the work of deputy under-secretary of state, Sir N Pritchard. FO comments on the draft are reproduced in the document below. For the final version of the paper, see 268.]

As I mentioned at our talk on 7 February, we have been studying with much interest here your paper on the Value of the Commonwealth to Britain, which Neil Pritchard was kind enough to send to our Planning Staff. We are very grateful to you for taking us into your confidence over this exercise.

2. If I am to respond in kind, I must start by explaining that we have come up against a basic procedural difficulty. As was inevitable from its terms of reference, your paper raises fundamental and controversial issues of great delicacy on which individual Ministers as well as officials are likely to have strong views, Because of this it would be difficult for the Foreign Office to comment officially on your paper without consulting the Foreign Secretary, which I do not imagine you would wish us to do at this stage. In any case, when the Foreign Secretary and other Ministers do come to be consulted, they may well feel that these are issues which they prefer to discuss directly with each other rather than through officials. We do not think therefore that Mr. Brown would wish us to attempt to produce any kind of agreed Commonwealth Office/Foreign Office paper or even a Commonwealth Office paper formally embodying Foreign Office views.

3. On the other hand, the subject of your paper is one of compelling interest and considerable relevance to Foreign Office concerns. We have all of us thought a great deal about it over the years; and in my own case I have the extra stimulus of being, so to speak, a Commonwealth alumnus. Our discussions of your paper have thus thrown up a considerable volume of comment, which you may conceivably find of some value. We have therefore prepared, *a toutes fins utiles*, the enclosed commentary which I hope you will accept as an informal and unofficial contribution to the very important task you have in hand.

4. Our comments are offered with much diffidence, and in the hope that the reason for their somewhat critical tenor will not be misunderstood. They have been deliberately cast in critical form, not from hostile motives but because any paper of this kind seems likely to carry maximum weight to the extent that it anticipates and deals with all the serious objections to the Commonwealth which (rightly or wrongly) are at present put forward by the organisation's detractors in Britain. (Needless to say there was plenty of difference of view among ourselves certainly on emphasis and sometimes on 'basics'.) The aim in much of what follows is, in the accepted role of an *advocatus diaboli*, to put forward (where necessary) destructive arguments for a constructive purpose. You will also notice that we suggest (e.g., paragraph 4 of the enclosure) that there are some positive aspects of the Commonwealth connection which will deserve more emphasis in an eventual paper.

General comments

(i) *The 'break-up' threat*

In the concluding section, from paragraph 25¹ onwards, it could perhaps be more clearly stated that the one solid advantage which would flow from the break-up of

¹ Para 26 of the paper at 268.

the Commonwealth is that the threat of such a break-up could never thereafter be used to persuade Her Majesty's Government to adopt policies which are contrary to British interests; but that precisely this advantage could be secured at a less drastic price if Her Majesty's Government were to let it be known that as a matter of principle they are resolved never to let their policies be affected by Commonwealth break-up considerations. As the paper elsewhere illustrates, Britain has been increasingly finding herself in the position of the blackmailer's victim. The new Commonwealth countries have in effect said to us 'you must do X, because if you don't we shall see to it that the Commonwealth breaks up'. We should perhaps consider whether our answer in future could not be that we do not pay blackmail of this kind; that we shall do X if we deem it to be in our interests; that in assessing our interests we shall of course take account of the Commonwealth as a whole as well as of our relations with the individual member countries; but that we shall not let the calculation of our interest be dominated by fears for the future of the Commonwealth, since we could not (any more than any other independent Commonwealth Government) permit the Commonwealth consideration to override Britain's sovereign freedom of independent action. In other words, we would take our stand formally and be prepared to uphold it publicly on the classic Commonwealth doctrine of the 'freedom to differ' referred to in paragraph 6 of the paper; we would insist that this applies to Britain as much as to any other member; and we would make clear that, if this freedom is denied to us under threat of Commonwealth break-up, we should however reluctantly be prepared for whatever degree of break-up was involved. We would not ourselves choose to dismember the Commonwealth. It would be up to those who were trying to put pressure on us to decide whether they themselves wanted to leave.

2. If we take this line it is possible (though not perhaps very likely) that the Commonwealth will break up. But this outcome, however unsatisfactory, might be better than acquiescing in a type of 'Commonwealth coercion' which could rapidly become intolerable to British public opinion and British interests.

(ii) *The 'non-governmental' Commonwealth*

3. A second general comment arises from what one might call the non-governmental side of the Commonwealth's nature. Because it rightly looks at the subject from the point of view of the British Government's interests, the paper is much concerned with the effect which the Commonwealth's existence has on the relations between ourselves and our fellow members at the governmental level. It might nevertheless be worth laying a little more emphasis on the importance of the Commonwealth's existence to the relationship between the British people and the peoples of other member countries. At the governmental level, as the paper makes clear, the difficulties are real and have been increasing; and the advantages have sometimes been exaggerated. But where the relationship between peoples is concerned, the difficulties seem fairly small and the advantages much easier to demonstrate. Governments are by and large hard-headed animals who calculate their interests and opinions nicely and are able to see that little might be essentially different in e.g. the British Government's relations with the Indian or, from a different standpoint, the Australian Government if the Commonwealth did not exist. Public opinion is less logical and more swayed by habit as well as by

emotion. Doctors, lawyers and teachers take an interest in their opposite numbers in other Commonwealth countries because there is a tradition or habit of doing so, as well as because there is some sense of special affinity. Commonwealth Office experience can no doubt offer plenty of instances to illustrate this point. It might perhaps be given a paragraph of its own somewhere near the beginning of the paper.

(iii) *Long-term prospect*

4. A third general comment concerns the long-term future of the Commonwealth. In the spirit of candour in which the paper is written, ought it not to face the probability that from Britain's point of view the Commonwealth as an asset is, however slowly, wasting? A good many of its virtues from our point of view (as well as some of its vices) derive from the awareness of common experience, some at least of it congenial, in the former British Empire. For most Commonwealth countries, that common experience is the dominant fact of the last century of their history, which in some cases is all the history they have. As that century of empire recedes into the past, folk memories of common experience are bound to grow weaker. In the end they will be eroded altogether, and in the long run this is likely to mean that the Commonwealth as an institution will disappear, even if the kind of memory survives in some cases such as still associates, say, Latin America with Spain. It is hardly conceivable that by the end of the 21st century there should still exist a club whose membership is limited to those who were governed from London for at least part of the period from 1900 to 1950.

5. But if we value (as we should) the links which these memories of common experiences provide, then it is clearly in our interest that the process of erosion should be as gradual as can be contrived. That, it seems reasonable to suppose, is where the Commonwealth as an institution comes in. While it survives, it will by its very existence slow down the erosion rate. No one is likely to invent a better contrivance for this purpose. Therefore the Commonwealth's survival is in Britain's interests (provided of course that it is not used to blackmail us; see paragraph 1 above).

(iv) *Economic advantages and disadvantages*

6. A fourth general comment arises from the question of whether the Commonwealth does or does not have economic disadvantages for Britain as well as advantages. In its present form, the paper simply states that the economic disadvantages are small and outweighed by the advantages. This may be true, but it should perhaps be argued in more detail. There is, after all, a school of thought among British economists (and others who comment on the British economy) which would claim that the continued existence of the Commonwealth has distorted to our disadvantage the pattern of British trade and the flow of British investment overseas; that it has complicated our international trade negotiations; and that it has imposed burdens on Britain which her economic situation makes her ill suited to bear. This school of thought would dispute the statement in paragraph 3 of the paper that 'the modification of policy imposed on us' by the Commonwealth connection have not (Rhodesia apart) 'been more than marginal'. They would cite the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, for instance, as an example of undesirable distortion, whereas the paper quotes it among the 'solid multilateral advantages' of the Commonwealth

connection (paragraph 12 (vi)).² They might also ask whether our present butter arrangements, designed to a considerable extent to accommodate New Zealand, are really best suited to promote the separate interest of the United Kingdom. Similarly, they would take issue with the third and fourth sentences of paragraph 15. Without going into the rights and wrongs of all this, which are very complicated, it is clear that there is a case to be answered here and that the paper would gain from taking account of it.

(v) *Effect of Britain's joining the E.E.C.*

7. A fifth general comment relates to the possibility that Her Majesty's Government's current European policy may result in British membership of the E.E.C. within the next few years. Clearly, this is one of the great unknowns in all assessments of British overseas policy at the present time. It would be difficult for the paper to prejudge the issue in any way. But it would perhaps gain if it contained some specific reference to the possibility of our joining the E.E.C. and briefly considered some of the intangible consequences which might follow, including the diversion into future European channels of some of the British energies—commercial, intellectual and emotional—which at present find expression in the rest of the world including the Commonwealth.

(vi) *The Commonwealth and Britain's international standing*

8. A sixth and last general comment arises from paragraph 12 (iv),³ and is only not listed under the specific comments below because it is a point of fundamental importance with implications affecting much of the rest of the paper. The issue is whether our membership of the Commonwealth really does give Britain 'greater status internationally' than we would enjoy if the Commonwealth did not exist, and particularly whether 'part of the respect paid to British views in Washington is due to . . . appreciation of Britain's Commonwealth role'. Foreign Office experience in dealing with the United States and other foreign countries suggests, on the whole, that this is rather doubtful. Most foreigners nowadays seem to judge Britain by what she is in herself and to take little account of her Commonwealth connections. Indeed, where such account is taken, it is not always to our advantage; however misguidedly, some foreigners at least would argue that British concern for the Commonwealth is evidence that Britain is living in the past.

Specific comments

9. In paragraph 2, on a purely historical point, were the reasons quoted really our motives (or all our motives) for deciding to promote the idea of Commonwealth membership for our former dependencies as they reached independence?⁴ Was there

² This particular reference does not appear in the final version of the paper. Commenting on the draft, G B Shannon, assistant under-secretary of state at the Commonwealth Office, advised Pritchard that in 1966 under the CSA Britain was paying £48 for a ton of sugar when the 'free price' was £14. It was estimated the agreement had cost the UK between £20 million and £35 million a year since 1959. Shannon described the agreement as 'a burden, not a benefit, to Britain' (CO 1058/37, no 7, minute, 2 Dec 1966).

³ See para 12(vi) of 268 for how this point was modified in the final version.

⁴ The reasons given in para 2 of the draft were (a) for the purpose of maintaining UK influence and interests in newly independent countries, (b) in order to retain and strengthen friendly relations between governments and peoples on a broad Commonwealth basis, and (c) to enhance the UK's international status.

not perhaps (as paragraph 12 (iii) of the paper suggests)⁵ at least an element of tempering the wind to the shorn lamb of British public opinion, since it was easier to reconcile people to losing an empire if you could show them that they were gaining a Commonwealth? There may also have been, in at least some governmental quarters, a number of what we now know to have been illusions about the degree of close political, economic or even military co-operation which could be expected from Commonwealth members after independence; at the time it was perhaps not unreasonable to suppose that the leaders of the new Commonwealth would behave more as Smuts⁶ and Mackenzie King had done in the past than as Nehru and Nkrumah were to do in the future. (The further question 'after Nehru/Nkrumah what?' is, one agrees, also pertinent.)

10. In the last sentence of paragraph 3, it might perhaps be better to say '... collective pressures have grown greater.' After all, many of the most irksome pressures have been bilateral and independent of the Commonwealth tie. All that the Commonwealth can fairly be blamed for is having increased the scope for certain types of pressure on one particular multilateral basis.

11. In the last sentence of paragraph 5, Malta should perhaps be deleted, in the light of events since the paper was drafted.

12. In paragraph 11, the first sentence might strike some readers as a bit optimistic. Certainly, as the paper goes on to say, the wish to preserve the Commonwealth was a major factor in the Cabinet's thinking in September 1966.⁷ But if public opinion polls are anything to go by, there seems to be at present fairly widespread doubt in Britain about the value of the Commonwealth.⁸ Within the much smaller circle of people in this country who are seriously interested in world affairs, the mood of the younger generation seems to be distinctly anti-Commonwealth. Even the Cabinet, to judge by the fact that the present exercise is being undertaken at all, is in some doubt as to whether its September decision was soundly based. The fact of the matter seems to be that support for the Commonwealth is now a minority view in Britain. Like other minority views, it may well be correct. But it would probably be unwise (as other parts of the paper in fact make clear) to assume that the break-up of the Commonwealth is something everyone could be relied on to be against.

13. In paragraph 12 (i), there is perhaps some danger of overstating an essentially good case. The links are there and are valuable and the Commonwealth is a means of preventing (or at any rate slowing down) their disappearance. But in saying that the Commonwealth corresponds with reality, it might be wise to make clear that the correspondence is not altogether exact. The links apply, in differing degrees to e.g. Ireland, the United States, South Africa and Egypt, which are not members of the Commonwealth; and scarcely apply at all to e.g. Cyprus, which is. Moreover, the links would undoubtedly survive a Commonwealth break-up; the question is whether their life expectation thereafter might be reduced. Even as things are, the strength of the links and their likely durability vary considerably from one Commonwealth country to another. On a point of detail, do we in fact nowadays have 'largely common systems in government'?

14. Paragraph 12 (iii) is a very fair point.⁹ But is it not perhaps out of place in a list of the Commonwealth's advantages to Britain now and in future? Its relevance is mainly (and increasingly) to the past.

⁵ Para 12 (iv) in the final version.

⁶ J C Smuts, prime minister of South Africa, 1919–1924, 1939–1948.

⁷ See 217, note 4.

⁸ cf 218.

⁹ Para 12 (iv) in the final version.

15. In the last sentence of paragraph 12 (v), the reference to Britain's leadership is perhaps contentious. Is it right to assume that in the future we shall be able to exercise effective leadership in such a disparate group?

16. The advantages referred to in paragraph 12 (vi)¹⁰ are very real; as the paper points out, however, their continuation is not dependent on the Commonwealth. Although the point should certainly be made somewhere, it seems a little out of place in this particular list.

17. It would perhaps be worth making clear that what the paper says in the second sentence of paragraph 17, about the bilateral nature of certain facts and interests which are sometimes wrongly ascribed to the Commonwealth as a whole, applies to some of the virtues ascribed to the Commonwealth as well as to a number of the vices.

18. In paragraph 17 (c) (i),¹¹ it might be a help to the general reader if the paper indicated whether or not the 'preconception' quoted is correct. If it is a view which was once taken for granted but is now to be regarded as somewhat out of date, there would perhaps be advantage in saying so in terms.

19. At the end of paragraph 17 (d),¹² the phrase 'had not completed' might be regarded in some quarters as something of an understatement.

20. Paragraph 18¹³ makes a key point, which might well be worth elaborating.

21. The point in the first sentence of paragraph 22, that our present difficulties with the Commonwealth will diminish in the future, might perhaps be balanced by adding (on lines indicated by the third general comment above) that the same must be expected to be true of the Commonwealth's present advantages to Britain.

22. At the end of paragraph 25 (i),¹⁴ the reference to the monarchy is surprising. No doubt it would be affected in the literal sense; but would there in fact be any adverse effect on its popularity in this country and therefore on its prospects of survival?

23. Paragraph 25 (iii) suggests that the break-up of the Commonwealth might lead to a withdrawal of British aid. But as the paper elsewhere makes clear, this aid is largely based on hard calculations of bilateral self-interest; is it therefore correct to suppose that it would come to an end if the Commonwealth as an institution did so? It might of course be gradually reduced over a period, as British public interest in the Afro-Asian world declined (this point is well made in paragraph 12 (ii)); but that would be very different from a complete cut-off in short order.

24. In paragraph 25 (iv),¹⁵ the references to Singapore/ Malaysia and India are perhaps rather too sweeping. As regards the former, paragraph 17 (b) may well be more correct in suggesting that our current defence effort in the Far East has not really got much to do with the Commonwealth as an institution, but derives rather from the bilateral relations we wish to enjoy with the United States, Australia, Malaysia, etc.;

¹⁰ Para 12 (vi) of the draft dealt with the economic advantages of the Commonwealth. In the final version this was dealt with in a separate section beginning at para 17.

¹¹ Para 17 (c)(i) of the draft referred to difficulties posed by the Commonwealth in relation to the Common Market on account of the preconception of the Commonwealth association requiring Commonwealth goods to have preference over foreign goods; consequently it was assumed preference for EEC goods over Commonwealth goods would be wrong and inconsistent with the principle of the Commonwealth.

¹² See para 23 (c) of the final version.

¹³ See para 24 of the final version.

¹⁴ See para 28 (i) of the final version.

¹⁵ The draft of para 25 (iv) read: 'A rupture by Singapore and Malaysia would make a nonsense of the whole of our current defence effort in the Far East and if India were to withdraw in anger the consequences to our extensive economic interests would be incalculable.'

even if the Malaysians/ Singaporeans were to withdraw our base facilities because they left the Commonwealth (which itself seems a little uncertain), would not this merely open the way to the more economical deployment of our military effort in the Far East which we originally envisaged at the penultimate stage of the Defence Review? As regards India, can one confidently go much further than what is said in your paragraph 25 (ii), that our economic interests in the Commonwealth might suffer to an unquantifiable extent from a break-up? It seems unlikely that Indians would stop buying British goods (or accepting British investments) so long as the terms were right, whatever was happening to the Commonwealth. They do at present lean over in our favour economically, but that is perhaps more a matter of tradition and habit than of conscious *tendresse* for a Commonwealth partner.

25. The second half of paragraph 26¹⁶ might strike readers as something of an overstatement, mainly for the reasons given in the comment on paragraph 25 (iii) above. It could be argued that the survival or non-survival of the Commonwealth will not have much effect one way or the other on the considerable amount of instability which is likely to arise in Africa and Asia in the course of the next generation whatever happens.

26. In paragraph 27(a) (i),¹⁷ the last phrase (from ‘. . . and what would be involved if . . .’) raises some of the doubts set out in the first general comment above. It might therefore be preferable to leave this particular phrase out.

27. In paragraph 27 (e),¹⁸ the penultimate sentence might be better without the ‘just’. In the final sentence, it is surprising to find such an emphatic distinction made between those Commonwealth countries which have the Queen as their Head of State and those Commonwealth countries which do not; the former are something of a mixed bag, while the latter include a number of the Commonwealth’s most valued members (e.g. India, Kenya, Malaysia). The point which might perhaps be emphasised instead is the closeness of the links which do exist, based not on the monarchy or any other constitutional theory but on the very practical comings and goings of innumerable persons in many different walks of life.

¹⁶ In draft the second half of para 26 read: ‘In sum, therefore, if the Commonwealth were to break up we should lose our present position in the world, and conditions of serious instability would arise throughout Africa and possibly Asia.’ Compare para 29 in the final version.

¹⁷ In draft para 27 (a)(i) read: ‘There is no reason why the Commonwealth association should not stand in the way of such a process [ie a relationship resembling more that between the UK and a foreign country], which would naturally involve at every stage consideration of the extent of the effect, if any, on our bilateral interests and what would be involved if the Commonwealth country concerned were to react by withdrawal from the Commonwealth.’

¹⁸ This remained unchanged in the final version, see para 35 (f).

264 FCO 49/155, no 9

20 Feb 1967

‘Value of the Commonwealth’: minute by Sir S Garner on the FO comments¹

Covering letter

The paper is one by officials and I think it should remain in this form. Whatever view Ministers may ultimately take, the memorandum would be best if it is as objective as

¹ Garner’s minute refers to the points made by Gore-Booth in 263.

possible and written without reference to political matters that could be the subject of Party controversy. It should also be a Commonwealth Office memorandum without the formal agreement of other Departments.

Commentary

(i) The general point is valid—but the fact is that the threat of the break-up of the Commonwealth has been over emphasised for political reasons by the present Prime Minister. In fact we have not allowed ourselves to be blackmailed by Ghana and Tanzania (who broke off relations), or by Zambia who have threatened to leave the Commonwealth—though, admittedly, Mrs. Hart's agreement involved a high price if Zambia remains within the Commonwealth.²

I entirely agree that we must not allow ourselves to be subject to coercion—but thought that the paper brought this out sufficiently.

(ii) Of course. I am surprised that we have not in fact made more of the point and there should be a paragraph. As I have said in every public speech I have made, the Commonwealth is an association of peoples and not an alliance of Governments and it is the personal relations between individuals that give it its real vitality.

(iii) This seems to me a very Foreign Office way of putting things though, of course, the general point is valid.

But equally, by the end of the 21st century, the Commonwealth could have expanded—because it is a good working model of international collaboration, it could be the nucleus of an effective world organisation.

(iv) Economists to advise. We have, of course, already taken the sugar point.

(v) O.K.

(vi) I think that this is where we differ from the Foreign Office on their own home ground. Certainly Washington is always telling us in relation to problems in Africa and in Asia that they expect a Commonwealth solution and expect Britain to take the initiative. I think they also value and respect us precisely because of our expertise in Africa and Asia.

Specific comments

9. The passage in question is not meant to be a statement of *all* our motives. Indeed, perhaps the main reason for Colonies on independence becoming full Members of the Commonwealth is that this was their own wish. In fact in 1947 very few thought that India (and certainly not the Foreign Office) would continue within the Commonwealth.

Incidentally Mackenzie-King was surely far more like Nehru than he was like General Smuts. And Field-Marshal Ayub³ is certainly a far better Commonwealth member than General Hertzog ever was.

10. There is not much in this.

11. No! Malta is certainly outside the Afro-Asian world and, though she has been given cause to apply pressure on us, she is not in an 'international pressure group'.

12. What are the public opinion polls referred to? And what authority do the Foreign Office have to say that support for the Commonwealth is now a minority

² With President Kaunda warning that Zambia might leave the Commonwealth over Rhodesia, Judith Hart made visits to Lusaka in May and June 1966 to discuss sanctions policy and British proposals to help Zambia cut off imports from Rhodesia. The UK offered just under £14 million in aid (see 414, note 1), on the assumption Zambia would remain within the Commonwealth.

³ President of Pakistan.

view in Britain? (Before one could say this one would need to define what the Commonwealth meant to people in Britain—and it means a number of totally different things). Certainly all political Parties in this country continue to pay tribute to the Commonwealth—though there are some notorious rebels.

My main comment here is that it is a good thing that the Diplomatic Service has come about so that the Foreign Office can know something about the Commonwealth!

13. I stand by 'reality'—though no doubt the thought could be expanded.

On the point of detail perhaps 'administration' would be a better word than 'government'—though in fact all Commonwealth Governments follow, with varying modifications, the practice of Cabinet and Parliamentary responsibility.

14. I agree that the point will become decreasingly relevant in the future, but certainly it has some relevance now. In any case the Foreign Office seemed to like the point in their paragraph 9.

15. 'Leadership' perhaps goes too far—'as a leading Member'?

16. Put the point in parenthesis?

17. I cannot quite see the point of this complication.

18. I do not think we could ever reach agreement on this.

19. No! It is a *statement*.

20. We have elaborated—hence 'thus'.

21. No! Why *must* the advantages be expected to diminish?

22. A stupid comment—no-one suggested that the monarchy would not survive. But the Queen is Head of the Commonwealth and, by overseas visits, etc., has made herself part of what, *ex hypothesi*, would then be regarded as the 'gigantic farce'.

23. But it does not suggest this. The operative words are 'if' and 'largely'.

24. The Foreign Office have not read the paper. If the base facilities in South East Asia were withdrawn, this would make nonsense of our *current* defence effort, (leaving aside whether that effort is right or could be changed with advantage to us) and the assumption about India was that she would 'withdraw in anger'.

In general I suspect that the Foreign Office are so used to having broken relations with foreign countries which time restores, that they overlook the consequences of a real break with a Commonwealth country which would be far more serious since deeper emotions would be involved.

25. I would agree to modify paragraph 26 without going all the way with the Foreign Office.

26. Ours is a bad sentence anyhow.

27. O.K.—omit 'just'.

In the last sentence we have the old Commonwealth in mind and should say so.

VALUE OF THE COMMONWEALTH *Further Amendments*

Paragraph 7

The point might be made that the 'consensus' procedure has been developed in the Security Council and that the Secretary General is the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Paragraph 14 would read better if the first ten words were omitted.

Paragraph 19

It was only free entry *into Britain* that was in question! No-one would dare to suggest that it applied otherwise.

Paragraph 20

'Analysis' in line 7 is rather a pompous word. ? substitute 'it may be hoped'.

Paragraph 23: line 6

I do not understand 'though quite the least glamorous'.

Paragraph 24: last line

'Different' from what?

Paragraph 25

(iii) needs re-writing. If British influence and aid were immediately replaced by the U.S. the consequences might not be serious.

Paragraph 27

The opening words are odd.

265 FCO 24/190

15 Mar 1967

[Australia and the Commonwealth]: minute by Sir S Garner

Sir Walter Cawthorn,¹ who was my Australian colleague in Ottawa (previously Australian High Commissioner in Pakistan) called to see me yesterday. He is a close observer of the scene and has many friends in this country.

He told me that he had been greatly shocked to hear so many people in Britain talking about the possibility of Australia leaving the Commonwealth. He thought that this was complete rubbish and could not imagine how the idea had got into our heads.

I told him that I agreed that it was complete rubbish, but that I thought there were possibly two reasons why people might have been led to say this. First, it was no secret that many Australians (and notably, of course, Sir R. Menzies) were disturbed at the way things were developing with the new Commonwealth countries and were somewhat resentful of the fact that Britain appeared to pay so much attention to them. Secondly, I thought it was true to say that many people in Britain were jealous of the United States and, in turn, were resentful when they saw signs of the United States usurping Britain's place. Clearly Australia was developing ever closer contacts with the United States and the recent triumphant visit of President Johnson had seemed to put the seal on the relationship.

Nevertheless I did not think that there was anything to be disturbed about in all this; on the first point, many people in Britain shared the Australian doubts about the new Commonwealth. On the second point, we of course had our special relationship with the United States across the Atlantic and it was perfectly right and

¹ Australian high commissioner at Ottawa, 1959–1960.

natural that Australia and New Zealand should have their relationship across the Pacific. There should surely be nothing incompatible in good relations both with the U.S. and the U.K. and, indeed, this was all part of 'inter-dependence' in the western alliance.

I went on to say that, on the contrary, I thought that Australians should be very satisfied with the British attitude today. Broadly speaking, I would say that Australia was very near to the top of the popularity poll with the British public. Furthermore Australia might well have expected a Labour Government to withdraw from defence commitments East of Suez, whereas, on the contrary, in spite of great difficulties and pressures, Labour Ministers had taken a most robust line. But I thought that Australians should understand that if we were staying on in Singapore the reason, to the extent of at least 70%, was on account of Australia and was not due to direct British interests. General Cawthorn fully accepted this and appreciated it. I added that of course our defence commitments were under constant review and there would no doubt continue to be a further rundown in the Far East, but I hoped that this could be achieved in a way that was manageable. General Cawthorn understood this and agreed with this point also.

266 FCO 22/7, no 40

30 Mar 1967

[Commonwealth co-operation]: letter from A C Smith to Mr Wilson

It is now more than eighteen months since you and the other Commonwealth Heads of Government appointed me as Commonwealth Secretary-General. In the course of the past year or so I have visited fifteen Commonwealth countries in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, and had discussions with their Heads of Government. Among most of them I have found a real desire to nourish and strengthen the association; but I fear that unless this can be channelled to constructive ends it may well flicker out in widespread public disillusion. The future of the Commonwealth can by no means be taken for granted, and I have had cause particularly in recent months to be deeply concerned about it. I would welcome an opportunity to discuss this with you. I shall be leaving London on April 7 for a visit to Wellington, Canberra and Ottawa: if it is possible for you to spare me half an hour before then I would be grateful. In any case you might find it helpful if my main points are first set out in a letter for your consideration.

The rapid expansion of the Commonwealth in recent years has made consultation and cooperation among its members less easy. But it can be more significant. In the coming decades the most important and difficult problems of world politics are, in my judgment, likely to be those involved in relations between different races, different regions, and above all between the affluent industrialised societies and the less developed and often still tragically poor societies. If the rich/poor dichotomy should coalesce with suspicion and disenchantment between races the danger to all could be great. In my judgment the modern multi-racial Commonwealth can be used to play a major part in contributing to harmony and cooperation across the major divisions of mankind.

But for this it has first to survive. As you know, on two or three occasions over the past eighteen months the Commonwealth has nearly blown up with a bang over

Rhodesia. Yet it has always seemed to me that the greater danger to the Commonwealth was and increasingly is that it could subside into fatuity and die with or without a whimper, through a progressive loss of vision, content, and the will to use it. Already signs of disenchantment can be found in many countries of the Commonwealth; critical voices are raised by those who take an exclusively national or regional stand, forgetting that valid national or regional objectives must still somehow be fitted into an international context, and that an attitude of regional isolationism could be dangerous. Perhaps these signs are part of a wider disenchantment with international organisations and international ideals. But this reinforces the warning that the association cannot safely be taken for granted and allowed to drift.

The old traditional underpinning of bilateral trade with Britain, and of Commonwealth preferences, while still important, is becoming relatively less significant to new members as they diversify their trade. Developments in the Kennedy Round and the EEC, however desirable in themselves, could further reduce this. The old strategic reliance on British military power is also less relevant to many members today. The whole network of ties of sentiment that stemmed from a departed Empire will have increasingly to be replaced, as one generation succeeds another, by a conscious recognition of the value of building contacts between the various members, and by a willingness to make fuller use of the common institutions, traditions and methods of work on which these contacts can be based. If we want the present association to survive it seems to me essential to increase its recognised usefulness and to give it some new content that will have a specifically Commonwealth image. This can realistically be done by undertaking certain multilateral activities of benefit to its members. They need not be on a large scale but they will need to be positive and identifiable.

This underlying consideration has influenced me in preparing and discussing with governments a number of suggestions for possible action, based on the direction given me by Prime Ministers in paragraph 20 of the Agreed Memorandum to assist 'in advancing, and obtaining support for, development projects and technical assistance in a variety of fields on a multilateral Commonwealth basis, as appropriate'.

The first suggestion is for a small multilateral technical assistance programme. In a paper already circulated to your officials I have examined the possibility of creating a small Commonwealth Planners Service to provide those countries which so request with short-term expert assistance to supplement their own administrative and technical resources in dealing with problems of planning and project formation. It includes suggestions for various technical assistance services where, because of a common working language, educational backgrounds and administrative methods, Commonwealth cooperation is especially appropriate.

Secondly, the Government of India has followed up a proposal first discussed at the Trade Ministers Meeting last year. It has proposed the creation of a Market Development Fund, to provide assistance for increasing and diversifying the export trade of Commonwealth countries both inside and outside the Commonwealth. This Indian proposal has been circulated to governments and I hope shortly to add some comments by the Secretariat. Details would have to be examined carefully by experts. But the principle of focussing some aid on the expansion of export earnings of developing countries seems both sound and important.

Finally, I have it in mind to seek the views of governments on some further

methods of expanding educational cooperation—already one of the most successful forms of Commonwealth effort. At a relatively modest cost it ought to be possible to see some expansion of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Programme and to promote exchanges of textbooks, learned periodicals and perhaps university teachers.

All these suggestions, except the last which have yet to be circulated and which will I hope be considered by Education Ministers at their meeting later this year, will be discussed by senior Planning and Aid officials when they meet in Nairobi in May. At this meeting, which has been arranged at the request of Trade Ministers, I am hopeful that recommendations can be hammered out for submission to governments. It seems to me important that the Nairobi meeting be positive.

This, however, can be assured and the detailed problems overcome only if the clear will exists to make greater use of the association. The habit of consultation and the international role of the Commonwealth in political as well as economic cooperation may perhaps best be preserved and enlarged by evolving new forms of cooperation in trade promotion and development. The technical details can be left to the experts who will discuss the various suggestions, but their discussions must be shaped by an underlying awareness of the large issues at stake. The question of broad strategy, of the political will to use and to put more positive content into the Commonwealth, is for governments to resolve. Their attitudes on this fundamental issue will provide the context in which specific proposals for further Commonwealth cooperation will be examined.

For this reason I felt that I should raise such a basic issue directly with you and to seek your help. You yourself are well aware of the opportunities which the Commonwealth offers in providing a useful means of contact and consultation with areas beyond those of immediate regional concern. This awareness is shared by many others, and there is a significant fund of goodwill and interest among many sections of their peoples. It may be that a special responsibility lies with Britain and the older members of the Commonwealth who are most familiar with the characteristics and distinctive advantages of the Commonwealth, to give careful thought to the future uses of the association and to offer a constructive lead to the others.

I am writing in similar terms to Mr. Holt, Mr. Holyoake, and Mr. Pearson.

267 PREM 13/1367

5 Apr 1967

[Commonwealth co-operation]: record by A M Palliser of a meeting at Downing Street between Mr Wilson and A C Smith

Commonwealth Prime Ministers' meeting

Mr. Smith said that a few Commonwealth Heads of Government had asked whether there was to be a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting this summer. His view was that this was unnecessary and that no meeting was required at least before the end of the year. *The Prime Minister* agreed. There had been some informal discussion in Whitehall about this and about the possibility of holding some more limited kind of meeting in Africa. But in view of the Rhodesian situation he was opposed to any meeting unless really strong pressure for it developed. He would prefer to allow time for sanctions to take effect. At the previous Prime Ministers'

Meeting the Afro-Asian members had succeeded in achieving a British commitment to 'no independence before majority rule'; at the next meeting they might well press for the use of military force or for sanctions against South Africa. Moreover, many Commonwealth Heads of Government, particularly in Africa, would be unwilling to leave their countries at present; and he was not prepared to accept a Prime Ministers' Meeting attended only by the 2nd XI. There was no need for a collective discussion of the British approach to the Common Market. Each Commonwealth country had a different position towards this; and there had been, or would be, full opportunity for direct exchanges with the countries most concerned involving the Commonwealth Secretary, the Foreign Secretary, himself and other Ministers or senior officials.

Mr. Smith said that he entirely agreed. Hitherto it had been traditional that there was an interval of 18 months or more between Prime Ministers' Meetings. He would continue to work to 'stall off' any pressure for a meeting.

The future of the Commonwealth

Mr. Smith said that he was concerned about the future of the Commonwealth Club. It had great potential and the Russians or the Chinese would give a large amount to dispose of an equally effective instrument for influence in world affairs. But he sensed a growing disillusionment which needed to be checked. *The Prime Minister* said that he shared *Mr. Smith's* hopes and his apprehensions. Britain too had had some disenchanting experiences. The Afro-Asian 'caucus' had proved excessively tedious at the last meeting. Moreover, the Commonwealth showed little disposition to help Britain or to play a constructive part, for example, at the United Nations. Gibraltar was an eloquent example of this. The largely Afro-Asian United Nations Committee of 24, on which the Afro-Asian members of the Commonwealth should be able, if they chose, to exert considerable influence, was in practice supporting Fascist Spain in pursuing policies directly contrary to the wishes of the inhabitants of Gibraltar. Aden was another case where greater help from the Commonwealth would be welcome.

Mr. Smith said he had been approached by the Foreign Minister of the Southern Arabian Federation about possible membership of the Commonwealth by the Federation and had been invited to visit the Federation. His personal view was that in view of the considerable embarrassment to many Commonwealth members that such an application would cause, everything should be done at present to defer it. *The Prime Minister* agreed; in any case the problem could not arise until after the independence of Southern Arabia. The British Government were concerned whether it would be possible to achieve entry into the United Nations for Southern Arabia, which was all too likely to be vetoed in the Security Council.

Reverting to the future of the Commonwealth. *Mr. Smith* said that the Prime Ministers had directed him to study ways of providing aid to the developing countries on a multilateral basis. He was investigating the possibilities of doing this on a small scale. Most of the developing Commonwealth countries strongly supported him but he had met considerable opposition in the Ministry of Overseas Development and in certain other of the developed Commonwealth countries. This opposition was similar to that exerted earlier by Canada, Britain and others against the concept of United Nations aid on a multilateral basis. However, he had received his directive from the Prime Ministers and was thinking of proposing the formation of a small group of not more than 40-50 people consisting of economic planners and technicians drawn

from both the advanced and the developing countries. *The Prime Minister* asked whether this would be a central planning and advisory body or a corps of experts, members of which would be prepared to spend a number of years in a developing country. *Mr. Smith* said that he was thinking of the latter. The cost need not exceed about £200 thousand. There was a real need for this kind of assistance with the smaller and poorer countries, e.g., in Africa, where there was inadequate expertise to formulate requirements and projects. Both Kenya and Malaysia were keen on the project and had indeed competed strongly for the holding of the official meeting, at which he hoped it would be discussed. Kenya had won, which was why the meeting would be in Nairobi.

In further discussion, *the Prime Minister* said that he was not convinced that the smaller countries really lacked the necessary advisers to draw up requirements or projects. Even Lesotho had an extremely able South African economist with whom he himself had had a long and difficult discussion. However, he agreed that *Mr. Smith's* suggestions could be discussed at the Nairobi meeting. He wished himself to make two points. First, he thought that it was essential to identify a precise requirement in this field so that there should not be duplication of effort with existing bodies. Secondly, cost would be a key issue. We could not exceed our aid ceiling. If further money was to be allocated to *Mr. Smith's* project, it would presumably have to be found by reducing aid at present going to Commonwealth countries on a bilateral basis. We should have to be convinced that any money spent on *Mr. Smith's* multilateral project would be better spent than at present.

Mr. Smith said that he understood Britain's financial difficulties. But if H.M.G. could support his idea in principle he thought that the initial cost could be found by the Canadian Government which was increasing its aid budget. Alternatively Britain could supply a few seconded personnel. The real question was one of principle—whether aid was to continue on a bilateral basis or whether there should also be a multilateral Commonwealth effort. He remained strongly of the opinion that something had to be done to dispel the view widespread, particularly in Africa, that Britain was no longer interested in the Commonwealth. He did not himself subscribe to their view; but he was bound to point out that it existed.

The Prime Minister said that he would ask the Ministry of Overseas Development to give careful study to *Mr. Smith's* idea while the Secretary General was away on his forthcoming tour. They could then discuss it with *Mr. Smith* on his return and it could be further discussed at the Nairobi Meeting.

Commonwealth Trade Promotion Fund

Mr. Smith explained the Indian proposal and said that the Indian Government were pressing it very hard. *The Prime Minister* said that he himself had developed some rather similar ideas at previous Commonwealth meetings and had found the soil somewhat stony. This too could be looked at in Nairobi and here again the problem was surely to identify precise areas where something effective could be done. It would be pointless to promote exports from one Commonwealth country that would simply compete with and affect the export capacity or internal economy of others. Coffee, tea, textiles and raw cotton were all examples of this potential danger. *Mr. Smith* said that the Indians were also thinking in terms of expanding trade outside the Commonwealth (*the Prime Minister* said that this would of course be useful) but a major problem was the limited funds available to developing countries to do the kind

of sophisticated market research and advertising that could be done by the advanced countries. He would be submitting a report on this matter on April 7. The *Prime Minister* said that this too should be discussed at the Nairobi Meeting and an attempt made to iron out the potential rivalries between Commonwealth countries. He knew, for example, that West African producers of palm oil were concerned at the growing development of palm oil production in Malaysia. *Mr. Smith* said that these were not insuperable problems. He had discussed them with the President of the Board of Trade who had been sympathetic towards them. Unfortunately, the Nairobi Meeting was only a meeting of officials; and officials tended to be better at seeing the objections to any proposal than at providing solutions for it.

In conclusion, *Mr. Smith* said that though these were essentially economic problems they also had substantial political implications. At a time when Britain was making an approach to the Common Market—and he personally greatly hoped that she would succeed; he had always favoured closer British association with Europe—it was important to make the kind of modest gesture for which he was asking to demonstrate that Britain nevertheless believed in the continuing value of the Commonwealth. The *Prime Minister* said that the British Government of course continued strongly to believe in the value of the Commonwealth and in the continuing need for Britain to foster her long standing oversea connections. He had been at pains to point this out in his speech at Strasbourg in January. But Britain was not the only country to whom *Mr. Smith's* exhortations should be directed. He thought that the Secretary General might have considerable difficulties in getting his views accepted during his forthcoming visit to Australia and New Zealand. *Mr. Smith* assented ruefully.

268 CAB 129/129, C(67)59

24 Apr 1967

'The value of the Commonwealth to Britain': Cabinet memorandum by Mr Bowden. *Annex*

[Having already commented on this paper in draft (see 263 and 264), the FO was shown the amended version before it was circulated to ministers. FO officials took the view, 'by and large the paper has not been recast in the way it could have been if our general comments had been sympathetically received; and few of our detailed comments have been met at all' (FCO 49/7, minute by R L Wade-Gery, 25 Apr 1967). Sir P Gore-Booth minuted (26 Apr) no more could be done at present. Under the pressure of ministerial business the paper had been circulated to Cabinet for information, not discussion. But if ministers did consider it, the FO would have at its disposal a useful mine of information. According to Gore-Booth, the Commonwealth Office had been impressed by the coverage in the FO's critique of the paper, but less so by the detailed comments.]

Last September, when we were considering the policy which we should follow on Rhodesia at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting, many of us were worried about the problem of whether the value of the Commonwealth association to us might be outweighed by the extent to which it affects adversely our own policies and interests.¹ We are now of course considering the possibility of British membership of the European Economic Community which will have an impact on Commonwealth interests in a number of ways.

¹ See 217, note 4.

2. I accordingly asked my officials to prepare a broad analysis of the value of the Commonwealth, identifying and assessing the various general factors. I think that my colleagues will find it helpful to have this study by way of general background and I attach a copy at Annex.

Annex to 268

Developments in the Commonwealth in recent years have raised the question whether for Britain disadvantages in the Commonwealth relationship may now outweigh the advantages. A commentator has summarised one point of view as follows:—

‘It can be argued that, so long as the Commonwealth as a visible organisation was within Britain’s control on matters of importance to Britain, it served British interests. Now it has escaped from control, it is an expansive luxury; British policy could be more individual and more aware of direct British interests if the Commonwealth did not have to be appeased.’

This paper examines recent changes in the Commonwealth, and considers current advantages and disadvantages, future potential, and the possible amelioration of some of the contemporary difficulties.

I. *Changes in the Commonwealth*

2. On the basis of our experience with the old Commonwealth and with India, Pakistan and Ceylon it was judged to be to our advantage that Commonwealth Membership should be accepted as the right objective for our dependent territories:—

- (a) for the purpose of maintaining our influence and interests in those countries;
- (b) in order to retain and strengthen specially friendly relations between Governments and peoples on a broad Commonwealth basis;
- (c) by enhancing our international status;
- (d) because this was a link which the countries themselves wished to retain.

3. There was always a price to pay for this—in the modification of our policies in response to pressure from Commonwealth countries. But the modifications of policy imposed on us had not been more than marginal until in recent years when the price sought from us has increased in the context of the Rhodesia problem. How far the balance of advantage for Britain has thus in fact been changed is debatable; we have naturally resisted attempts to get us to pay too high a price. But certainly the collective pressures have grown greater.

4. This has arisen from the interplay of

- (a) the changing composition of the Commonwealth;
- (b) methods of procedure within the Commonwealth;
- (c) the particular policy issues which arise in the Commonwealth forum.

Composition of the Commonwealth

5. The Commonwealth now consists of 26 Members. Of these all but four (Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) would class themselves as ‘developing countries’. Only Britain, Canada, Australia, India and Pakistan have anything but the

most narrow international interests and obligations. 11 out of the 26 are African countries who concentrate emotionally and materially on African issues. 18 out of the 26 are emotionally involved in racial issues (India, Ceylon, Malaysia, Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana and Barbados in addition to the African countries). Only five (Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Malta) can be regarded as classed with certainty outside the Afro-Asian world in terms of international pressure-group politics.

Commonwealth procedures

6. Mr. Nehru defended India's association with the Commonwealth on the grounds that the Commonwealth did not get in the way of India's complete freedom of action. The classic Commonwealth doctrine emphasised that 'freedom to differ' was an essential element of Membership; and there was general agreement to avoid attempts to formulate joint Commonwealth policies, joint attitudes or joint programmes of action (except occasionally in a very generalised way on very broad topics—e.g. disarmament).

7. But in recent years a majority of Members have found themselves sufficiently in agreement on certain major issues to wish to assert their majority positions in order to impose policy decisions on the other Members. This has been only too vividly apparent at Meetings of Prime Ministers over Rhodesia, where African and racial issues combine. But the same tendency is beginning to show elsewhere—e.g. at Finance and Trade meetings where the ganging up of the developing countries in such international organisations as UNCTAD has been repeated in the Commonwealth environment. Inopportunately for us, a new emphasis is being placed on the concept of the 'consensus' which suits the majority interests. The Commonwealth Secretary-General, with the example of the Security Council no doubt in mind, has given this concept support and publicity. We have, so far, avoided voting procedures in the Commonwealth; but acceptance and development of the consensus thesis could also be disadvantageous.

Policy issues

8. The impact on British interests of these developments—the new composition of Commonwealth Membership and the use of pressure-group methods—has been exacerbated by the fact that some of the most important issues currently engaging the Commonwealth are Rhodesia, South Africa and development aid. It is precisely on these issues, whatever differences of views and policies may otherwise exist between themselves, that the majority of Commonwealth Governments find themselves in a natural alliance and one that is directed primarily to criticism of and attacks on British policy. Intransigent views on these subjects have an appeal to their home audiences which these Commonwealth Governments cannot resist.

9. We in Britain had for long benefited from the ability largely to stage-manage Commonwealth Meetings ourselves. A considerable limitation on that ability was an inevitable consequence of the growth of the Commonwealth and the changing, and reduced, status of Britain in the world. Moreover, there are good grounds for arguing that some reduction in the Commonwealth's 'Anglo-centricity' would be a healthy thing and make for a more even sharing of responsibilities within the Commonwealth. In practice, however, the changes have taken place in ways and under conditions which have, in the short term at any rate, involved serious disadvantages for Britain.

10. Since, therefore, the Commonwealth at present tends to operate as a special pressure group on Britain over important policy issues of particular significance and delicacy for the British Government, it is tempting to suggest that the removal of this pressure group must be a gain for us. But there are other elements in the balance sheet:—

- (a) the advantages of there being a Commonwealth in the world of today and for Britain herself;
- (b) the disadvantages to Britain of a break-up in the Commonwealth arising from hostility to Britain on the part of the majority of the Members.

II. *The Commonwealth as it is*

11. In spite of the obvious difficulties there is general agreement that, on balance, the Commonwealth is ‘a good thing’. This was certainly the underlying assumption in the Cabinet decision of 10 September, when it was agreed that major concessions should if necessary be made at the then forthcoming Prime Ministers’ Meeting in order to prevent a break-up of the Commonwealth.

Advantages

12. The main advantages of the Commonwealth are:—

- (i) It corresponds with reality. It has a historical justification and the association is firmly based on shared traditions. We speak the same language and understand each other—all the more so because we have largely common systems in administration, the law, the armed forces, education, British merchanting and banking traditions and interests. Oxbridge, Sandhurst, Shakespeare, the authorised version of the Bible are all genuine links. Even if the Commonwealth were a ‘farce’ it is not ‘phoney’.
- (ii) These are affinities not only between Governments but also between peoples. Some of them, for special reasons and in differing degrees, exist with other countries outside the Commonwealth such as Ireland and the United States. But there is no doubt that the existence of the Commonwealth association greatly helps to sustain and facilitate such links. In the new countries the Commonwealth association provides an acceptable multilateral ‘cover’ for links (e.g. between the Armed Forces) which might otherwise be at risk as ‘imperialist’ influences. In this country, and to a lesser but increasing extent among the older Members, it encourages a wide range of beneficial interest and activity in the other countries of the Commonwealth.
- (iii) The non-governmental multilateral and bilateral institutions within the Commonwealth are of an impressive extent and diversity. They cover a wide field—educational, medical, cultural, scientific, economic, financial, commercial, legal. These are the links which the Commonwealth Foundation has been set up to encourage.
- (iv) The modern Commonwealth was a triumphant technique to cover the process of decolonisation, turning ‘Empire’ into ‘Commonwealth’. This both enabled us to extricate ourselves from colonial responsibilities with honour and psychologically cushioned the shock for the people of Britain in adjusting to a new era (though it may also have encouraged some illusions).
- (v) The Commonwealth association helps Britain to exert influence on other Commonwealth Governments. While we are at present concerned about pressures

on us by other Commonwealth Governments, we should not under-estimate our own continuing influence on them, and the opportunities for us to exercise it which the Commonwealth association provides. The Commonwealth association also brings into play the moderating influences of the old Commonwealth and the less extreme Afro-Asians.

(vi) The Commonwealth association gives to each of its Members a greater status internationally than it would enjoy if the Commonwealth did not exist (part of the respect paid to British views in Washington is due to their appreciation of Britain's Commonwealth role and the opportunities it provides for British influence, particularly in Africa and Asia).

(vii) The multi-racial nature of the Commonwealth and the way in which it acts as a bridge between white, black, brown and yellow is not merely a well-worn truism. It is no less a valid and important truth; and regarded as such by Commonwealth Members as a whole. Moreover, it is a factor of special, and perhaps critical, significance in relation to what may well be the most explosive problem in the world over the next half century.

Disadvantages

13. As indicated in Section I, the main disadvantage to Britain of the Commonwealth as it is today is that it provides a ready-made forum for pressures to be brought to bear on the British Government to make concessions. These are frequently contrary to British interests and sought by a process of blackmail in the interests of preserving a semblance of Commonwealth concord. How far the removal of this forum would significantly reduce the pressures on Britain is debatable. We should still be exposed to pressures in the United Nations and, however unsatisfactory our recent experiences have been in Commonwealth Conferences, it is fair to say that in general Commonwealth representatives have behaved more responsibly and have been more responsive to British arguments and influence within the Commonwealth environment than in the United Nations. It can be argued that the existence of the Commonwealth enabled Britain to buy time over Rhodesia and that, in the absence of a Commonwealth forum, we should have had more difficulty in deferring damaging intervention by the United Nations. Nevertheless, in a special sense, Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meetings in recent years have contained examples of Britain clutching vipers to her bosom—and paying for it.

14. There is a substantial volume of opinion which, whatever the realities, believes that the Commonwealth association imposes disabilities on Britain; that these could be removed if it disappeared; and that we are paying unreasonably for the maintenance of an association with a number of countries who seem never to give us support and always to oppose and criticise us in public and in offensive terms.

15. There are criticisms that the Commonwealth hampers our foreign policy, involves us in defence commitments and is expensive in terms of aid. The case is debatable. Such concessions as we make to Commonwealth interests in conducting our foreign policy are compensated for by the international standing we derive from the existence of the Commonwealth. Nor do our Commonwealth commitments seriously hamper our trade negotiations and—though the interests of certain Commonwealth countries are a major factor—it is not the Commonwealth association that has so far prevented our entry into Europe. Our Defence Review policies and deployment have not had to be adjusted to meet requirements arising

from Commonwealth Membership as such. Admittedly the lion's share of our aid goes to other Commonwealth countries, but this has been inevitable for historical reasons. In any case a large part of our aid is in British interests and it is arguable that, even without the Commonwealth, we should still find it expedient to continue to do as much in those countries which are now in the Commonwealth.

16. The presence of coloured immigrants in Britain is the cause of much complaint, particularly in the areas most affected, and is undoubtedly a contributory cause in public opinion for the unpopularity of the new Commonwealth. But the entry of immigrants is our own responsibility and is now under strict control.

Economic relations within the Commonwealth

17. From the economic point of view the most important relationship within the Commonwealth has been that between Britain on the one hand and the rest of the Commonwealth on the other. Traditionally we exported manufactures to them; they exported raw materials and foodstuffs to us. But they no longer provide a sufficiently growing market for our manufactures, and we are no longer able to absorb most of the expansion in their output of raw materials and food. However, though Britain and the rest of the Commonwealth are less important to each other economically than they once were, the Commonwealth is still a market worth over £1,300 m. a year to us (which is about a quarter of our exports) and still provides slightly over a quarter of our imports.

18. The maintenance of this high level of intra-Commonwealth trade is due in part to the existence of the Commonwealth preference system. But preferences are already diminishing. Moreover in the Kennedy Round, Australia and Canada are offering to bargain more of them away in exchange for improved outlets elsewhere. So, to a lesser extent, are we.

19. On the financial side, our ability to provide Commonwealth countries with development capital—whether by way of private investment or aid—has diminished. Those Commonwealth countries which are large holders of sterling are likely in the course of time to reduce those holdings as our exports of long-term capital to them decline. The poorer countries, which are heavily dependent on aid, are able to obtain from us only a small proportion of the money they need from abroad, and so are increasingly having to obtain it from other financial centres, notably the United States and Europe, and this inevitably leads to changes in the pattern of their trade.

The Commonwealth and British membership of E.E.C.

20. There is nothing formally incompatible in Britain's joining E.E.C. and in Britain's continued membership of the Commonwealth. Other Commonwealth countries are closely involved in groupings of their own regions, but none of them are as close as ours would be with Europe if we accept the Treaty of Rome. It must be expected that in practice membership of E.E.C. will, in all fields, progressively strengthen our links with Europe and have an effect on our links with the Commonwealth. There will be intangible consequences in the political and cultural fields. Politically the changes could be considerable, but the extent and pace of change will depend on how both Europe and the Commonwealth evolve and develop. Britain's membership of E.E.C. is likely to lead to a diminution of our function as the lynchpin of the Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth's continued vitality will depend, more than in the past, on the importance which other Commonwealth

Members attach to it and the extent to which they wish to give it active and effective support. At the same time Britain may have a special role to play as a link between the two organisations; this could be important in dissuading the European countries from an inward-looking posture and in encouraging contact and understanding between them and the developing countries.

21. In the economic field, British membership of E.E.C. will create difficulties, which have been clearly identified in other papers, over bilateral trading and commercial relations with a number of individual Commonwealth countries. More generally if we join the E.E.C., most of the preferences we give to the Commonwealth will disappear; and indeed we will have to apply reverse preferences against a number of Commonwealth countries. In this situation those Commonwealth countries will obviously cease to grant preferences to us. And the effects of the levy system, of increased production in the U.K., e.g. of cereals, and of reductions in consumption, e.g. of butter, because of higher prices, will all serve to reduce our imports of food from the Commonwealth. Even now the belief in Commonwealth countries that we are likely to join E.E.C. is encouraging them to bargain away our preferences; thus the possibility that we may join is already having effects upon our exports to the Commonwealth.

22. As indicated in the preceding section, the economic value of the Commonwealth to us, and of us to the Commonwealth, is declining. This decline will be markedly accelerated if we join E.E.C. It is obviously not in our interest that it should decline unless we gain compensating advantages elsewhere. If we do not join E.E.C. it will be in our interest to do all we can to arrest the decline in the preference system and to make clear our determination to maintain and if possible intensify the Commonwealth economic connection.

Our bilateral interests

23. In identifying the effects of the Commonwealth on British policies and interests, it is important to differentiate between those arising from the Commonwealth association as such, and those arising from our interests vis-à-vis individual Commonwealth countries which would remain whether or not the Commonwealth continues. It is misleading to talk about the effects and interests of 'the Commonwealth' when what are really at issue are the effects and interests of our relations with individual, or groups of, Commonwealth countries. The following examples illustrate the point.

(a) Even if there were no Commonwealth, the stability and economic progress of India would continue to be a major British interest both because of our economic stake in the country and because of India's key importance vis-à-vis China. Similarly the need to maintain some sort of balance between India and Pakistan in our aid and other policies would remain.

(b) In the defence field the decision to maintain a British military presence in the Far East was based on a complex of considerations such as the desirability of our continuing to play a world role and to contribute to the containment of China, the undesirability of creating a vacuum or chaos in the Malaysia/Singapore area and our general relations with the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore. None of these are considerations arising from the Commonwealth association as such. Of course our relations with the latter four countries are coloured by the fact that they are also Members of the Commonwealth. But the basis of our relations with Australia and New Zealand (and the implications for our

defence policy) would not be affected if the Commonwealth were to disappear. Nor would such an event affect the main arguments in favour of our staying in our Singapore base for the time being.

(c) Much of our aid to Commonwealth countries arises from the fact that they were very recently dependent territories of ours. Our aid to those Commonwealth countries which achieved independence since 1957 began, in most cases, as a part of the decolonisation process; it was a golden hand-shake marking our sense of some continuing responsibility for their welfare in the immediate post-independence period and recognition that our imperial rule had not completed the process of making them viable and fully equipped for an independent existence.

(d) Commonwealth or no Commonwealth our very large commercial and financial stakes in, for instance, Australia and India will continue to be important considerations.

24. Thus the disappearance of the Commonwealth association would not alter the fact that, as a result of history and in a variety of ways, we have with individual Commonwealth countries specially complex and extensive interests.

25. At the same time—and this is partly at any rate the result of our own propaganda—it is a fact that many new Commonwealth countries believe it to be Commonwealth Membership as such which secures for them preferential treatment from Britain—e.g., trade preferences, sterling area arrangements, Commonwealth Sugar Agreement etc. In fact these need not necessarily be affected if the Commonwealth were to disappear (we still grant preferences to South Africa and the Republic of Ireland, and the sterling area includes non-Commonwealth countries). Per contra some of these arrangements are at the present time out of balance, so far as British interests are concerned, and we may have to review them in any event. It is possible that modifications in these benefits provided by Britain would affect the desire of some of the new Commonwealth countries to maintain their Membership. Probably timing and the spacing out of major changes would be an important consideration. It is for instance only recently that general acceptance has been secured for the restrictions—and very severe ones—which we now impose on the entry of Commonwealth citizens into Britain, the privilege of free entry into Britain having previously been thought to be an essential element in the Commonwealth association.

III. *If the Commonwealth broke up*

26. There are two prefatory comments to be made:—

(i) We are not considering the matter ideally and looking at what might be the position if the Commonwealth did not exist. The Commonwealth does exist as a fact and we are looking at what would be the results of a break-up.

(ii) The assumption must be, if the Commonwealth breaks up, not that it just quietly disintegrates, but that it breaks up in hostility towards Britain.

On these assumptions the balance sheet looks as follows.

Pros

27. The advantage we would positively gain would be a release from the special pressures brought to bear upon us by our partners as a Member of the Commonwealth,

and, as a result, some increased freedom of manoeuvre in our bilateral relations with individual Commonwealth countries. It can reasonably be argued that, if there never had been a Commonwealth, relations satisfactory to Britain would have been established on a strictly bilateral basis with the individual countries. It may be that, in the case of many if not all of the African and Caribbean countries, where our interests are small in comparison with our total interests overseas and where our influence has had a very limited effect, such a bilateral relationship would have been healthier for both countries and would have relieved Britain of the obligations and vulnerability to pressure which arise from the Commonwealth association. At the same time it must be noted that the prospects of reverting to a bilateral relationship satisfactory to Britain would be highly problematical following a situation where the Commonwealth had broken down as a result of highly emotional hostility on the part of the majority of Commonwealth countries towards Britain. Such hostility would no doubt be mitigated by considerations of self-interest (particularly financial and economic self-interest) in the former Commonwealth countries. But a period of most severely strained relations with at least a dozen former Commonwealth countries simultaneously could not be avoided.

Cons

28. We should suffer serious disadvantages:—

(i) Our prestige throughout the world would take a very heavy knock. Whatever we were able to salvage (e.g. by way of a continuing association with the Old Commonwealth and possibly some other Members) we should have proved that the Commonwealth was indeed a farce and that all our previous aspirations and policies were based on illusion. The Government would be discredited and even the Monarchy would be affected.

(ii) Our economic interests would suffer. It is impossible to quantify the extent to which they would be affected, since much would depend on how many countries remained friendly to us and wished to preserve a special relationship perhaps in a new form of association, the degree of hostility of those who left, and the decisions which we ourselves took about continuing aid and other special relations in each case. But if, as must be assumed, feelings ran high, it seems certain that many expatriate officers in African countries would come home, that the position of British businessmen abroad would be affected (even if British concerns were not expropriated) and that British interests would suffer in the award of future contracts.

(iii) In the circumstances envisaged, British influence in Commonwealth Africa would be removed and the continuance of British aid, at least at anything like its present scale, would be difficult if not impossible. As a result, the Commonwealth countries in Africa would be more unstable even than at present and would invite attention from outside. Whether the Americans or the Chinese could take our place seems an open question. If a wholesale African withdrawal led the Asian Members of the Commonwealth to follow suit, some very difficult questions would arise. If India were to withdraw in anger, the consequences to our very extensive economic relations with that country could be far-reaching. A rupture by Singapore and Malaysia could involve the sudden and humiliating withdrawal of our defence facilities.

(v) Our relations with the United States would be adversely affected. The Americans have shown that they attach great importance to our influence in Africa and Asia and to our continuing to play an effective role in both continents. A situation in which Britain was regarded in Africa and Asia as a hostile power would be most serious for them and for our relations with them.

29. In sum, therefore, if the Commonwealth were to break up we should greatly damage our present position in the world, the risks of serious instability in Africa and possibly in Asia would be increased, and our valuable commercial interests in those areas would be endangered.

IV. *The Commonwealth in the future*

30. The common historical links which have been basic for the Commonwealth association, derive from the days of British imperial rule, and as such they may be expected to diminish with the passage of time. It is not, however, a necessary consequence that this process will mean the eventual disappearance of the Commonwealth as an institution. The old cohesive factors may well be replaced by new ones—the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation are both very recent experiments. Much will depend on Britain's attitude.

31. We have drawn attention to the present difficulties which the Commonwealth pressure group creates for Britain. At the same time our own influence on other Commonwealth Governments is not negligible and it could be greater if the future provides a more favourable environment. There are prospects of this. The present difficulties should not be permanent and may well be comparatively short-term. Primarily they arise from 'colonialism' in two senses:—

(a) The acute interest and concern of the new Commonwealth countries in our liquidation of our colonial responsibilities—above all Rhodesia.

(b) A 'new-colonialist' attitude on the part of the new Commonwealth countries themselves.

32. 'New-colonialist' is used here to describe the persistence of a colonial attitude after independence—the maintenance of the characteristics of colonial politicians in the last stages of dependent territories, who feel free to make any criticism they wish, or any demand they wish, of the 'Imperial' power, but regard any criticism or demand by the latter as an expression of imperialism automatically to be resented. The 'double standard' arises from immaturity, and from the previous close relationship and consequent lack of a broad diversification of contacts and interests with other countries. It is reasonable to suppose that these sources of difficulty will progressively lessen in the years ahead. The present discontents are real enough; but any final judgement ought to depend on whether we see the potential value of the Commonwealth, in terms of our own interests, as sufficiently great to make worthwhile an attempt to work our way through the discomforts and difficulties of the Commonwealth in its present phase.

33. It is possible that other members of the Commonwealth could help to find acceptable final solutions to the problems of some of the dependent territories for which we remain responsible; some for instance may in course of time join with Commonwealth countries in one way or another (the Solomon Islands protectorate with Papua/New Guinea and some of the small Caribbean territories might

eventually pass into the orbit of Jamaica or Trinidad or into a wider Caribbean grouping); while more generally Canadian interest in the Caribbean and Australian and New Zealand interest in our Pacific territories, are valuable assets. These various possibilities would be less likely if the Commonwealth association were to disappear.

34. Of the major issues facing the world in the next 50 years, population growth, instant communications, and the eventual necessity for the whole North Atlantic technological and industrial base to find greater markets than the North Atlantic area itself can provide, all combine to make perhaps the most important task that of finding some *modus vivendi* between Western haves and the African, Asian and South American have-nots, and some way to bring the under-developed majority into a self-sustaining world system of prosperity. We in Britain are adjusting ourselves to a position as a leading power in the 'top-middle' category. We no longer command the resources of a major world power. But if Britain still has a role to play in these major issues of rich and poor, coloured and white, the Commonwealth association provides us, and also Canada and Australia, with special opportunities for doing so. There is in the Commonwealth a complex of links, not only political, but economic, educational, administrative and professional, which are directly relevant. It would be a grave matter for us, both nationally and internationally, if we were seen to be throwing away a special asset which could give Britain a position of central importance in the world in, say, the last two decades of this century, out of proportion to her comparative economic and military strength.

V. *Possible ameliorations*

35. While the existing disadvantages of the Commonwealth for us should not be permanent, there may also be ways in which these disadvantages could be reduced. The following are possible pointers for further study:—

(a) The main disadvantage of the Commonwealth for us at this time is its tendency to act as a pressure group on us. This could be exacerbated if other Commonwealth countries were to believe that our policies were dominated by fears for the future of the Commonwealth. In calculating our interests, the maintenance of the Commonwealth association is an important factor to be weighed, but not the only one. It is important, therefore, that other Commonwealth countries should not be lulled by the impression that, however offensive and difficult they may be, Britain can always be relied on in the last resort to ensure that the Commonwealth is sustained. We are not prepared to sustain the Commonwealth at *any price* to ourselves. This has become apparent to other Commonwealth countries in the course of the Rhodesia negotiations and has had a healthy effect; they themselves have been forced to ask whether the break-up of the Commonwealth would be a matter of comparative indifference to them and have answered in the negative. Where there is a possibility of one Commonwealth country leaving without dragging others with it, we should be able to adopt an even firmer posture. If the occasion arises we may need to make it clear that while we do not ourselves choose to dismember the Commonwealth, the classic Commonwealth doctrine of 'freedom to differ' applies to Britain as much as to any other member.

(b) We have long abandoned the concept of trying to deal in the same way and on the same footing with all countries of the Commonwealth, but it may be that there is scope for us to pursue more consciously and more strictly policies based on bilateral

considerations. We should not be thought to defer to views expressed by a Commonwealth Government simply because it is a Commonwealth Government which expresses them. Our governmental relations with the newer Commonwealth countries are in any case evolving towards a relationship more like that which subsists between this country and foreign countries, or between other Western countries and the developing countries in which they have substantial economic interests. It is not in our interests that such countries should continue for too long after the ending of Colonial rule to regard the Commonwealth association as primarily involving an obligation on Britain to provide them with unilateral benefits, financial and political.

(c) We should not unnecessarily expose ourselves to Commonwealth pressure group tactics. It will be to our advantage if there are fewer Commonwealth-wide meetings on policy issues, since these tend to facilitate and exacerbate such tactics. With the Commonwealth Secretariat in being this will not be primarily under our control and the Rhodesian problem may force further Prime Ministerial meetings on to us. Nevertheless it should be our general policy for the present not to initiate proposals for Commonwealth-wide meetings on high policy matters (e.g. Prime Ministers and Trade Ministers) and on occasion if necessary to oppose them (e.g. over Common Market negotiations—though of course we should arrange the fullest consultation by other means).

(d) At the same time we should encourage Commonwealth-wide meetings on practical matters of co-operation, and especially those which support the multifarious Commonwealth links in the professions, etc. (e.g. medical conferences, meetings of Law Officers, Speakers, etc.). The links between peoples in the Commonwealth are of a great variety and depth. They are important now and have a high potential value for the future. We should continue to lay particular stress on them.

(e) We should closely scrutinise particular Commonwealth institutions or arrangements if these seem no longer to be operating in our interests, though the timing and inter-relation of any major modifications will need watching if we are not to over-strain the Association itself.

(f) Public opinion in this country is naturally affronted at the violent and blackguardly attacks made on Britain by some Commonwealth leaders in Africa or of African origin, and asks whether we are paying too high a price to maintain a Commonwealth association which includes such obnoxious critics. In our publicity we should aim to put this present problem into perspective. We should also seek to present a realistic picture of the Commonwealth as it is today and to discourage illusions. The Commonwealth is not a single cohesive group and it cannot be expected to act just as an instrument for support of British policies. But it has an important role of value to Britain and the other Members and to the world at large.

269 FCO 20/38, no 13

10 Nov 1967

‘Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference, 1967’:
despatch from D A Scott¹ (Kampala) to Mr Thomson

As you yourself have good reason to know, the 13th Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was held in Uganda from 26 October to 2

¹ High commissioner, Uganda (see 262).

November. In this despatch I have the honour to report on its deliberations and to attempt to assess the value of the Conference to Uganda, to Britain and to the Association itself.

2. Your decision to combine leadership of the United Kingdom delegation to the Conference with your tour of African countries to discuss the Rhodesian situation was much appreciated here. Your presence provided the United Kingdom delegation with a welcome stimulus and the Conference itself with a specially topical focus for its debates.

3. Altogether some 160 delegates from some 65 branches of the Association attended the Conference. The largest were those from Canada, Malaysia, Australia, India and Britain—in each case because the constituent States, as well as the central Governments, are represented by branches sending separate representatives.

4. Following established practice, the Conference proper was preceded by up-country tours lasting some nine days, which enabled the delegates, who were divided into three parties for this purpose, to see something of the tourist attractions and economic development of Uganda. I gather that the rough roads and sometimes over-crowded schedules proved too much for a few members of the Conference; but there is no doubt that the great majority of the delegates were impressed by what they saw of the country and by the arrangements which had been made for their reception even in the remoter areas.

5. The Conference was formally inaugurated on 26 October by President Obote. The President had originally been scheduled to make a formal speech on that occasion, and to follow it by a speech of substance to open the foreign affairs debate on the following day. In fact, to the apparent surprise even of his own delegation, he introduced into his inaugural speech a strongly-worded attack on British policy towards Rhodesia. This was taken by many to imply that the Ugandan attitude towards your visit would be unforthcoming and combative. In the light of subsequent events it seems more likely that, by getting his tough speech out of the way at the beginning of the Conference, President Obote was deliberately giving himself latitude to enter into frank and constructive talks with you without fear of being subjected to criticism that his attitude towards Rhodesia was a weak one. There is no doubt, however, that his speech set the tone for the debate the following day, which concentrated almost exclusively on Rhodesia.

6. During the morning a number of violent and sometimes bitter attacks were launched against British policy. Mr. Sanjiva Reddy, the Speaker of the Indian Lok Sabha, took advantage of his temporary escape from the inhibitions of the Chair to make an intemperate and unconstructive speech which he may have thought reflected the general feeling of the Conference. A similarly violent line was taken by Mr. Ngala, the Kenya Minister of Co-operatives and Social Services, who was attending as an appointed member of the General Council. It became clear as the day went on, however, that a reaction from this extreme position was setting in and several New Zealand and Australian delegates, ably backed up by a representative cross-section of the British delegation, made helpful contributions. Thus when you, Sir, came to wind up the debate, much of the heat had been dissipated and you received a calm and relatively sympathetic hearing. It was probably helpful that, because of the lateness of the hour, your speech was only reported briefly in the *Uganda Argus* the following day; this was more than made up for by the fact that it was reprinted in full a day later and formed virtually a special supplement to the paper.

7. The second day's debate was devoted to the Commonwealth and the European Economic Community. Although Britain's application for membership was treated with familiar hostility by some delegations, notably those which one delegate described as the 'sugar and butter countries', the atmosphere was markedly cooler than on the previous day. On this occasion, it was the turn of the Australian delegation to take a particularly hard line; other delegates, while expressing alarm over their own countries' commodities (St. Lucia was particularly concerned about bananas) on the whole conceded our right to do what we considered best. This, I understand, represented an advance on the attitude taken on previous occasions and provided a good indication of the impact made by your own speech in the debate.

8. Apart from the set-piece debates, the Conference set up committees to consider relations with the Press and the powers of the Executive. Although, so far as I know, these did not lead to any far-reaching conclusions, one notable reform of the Constitution of the Association was adopted unanimously. This was the report of the Committee which met in Malta earlier this year under the Chairmanship of the Hon. Peter Howson, Australian Minister for Air, which recommended the setting up of a new and high-powered Executive Committee to carry on the business of the Association between the Annual General Meetings. Under this recommendation, the Commonwealth is divided into a number of regional groups who choose delegates to represent them on the Executive Committee. The United Kingdom is grouped with Malta and one or two other smaller territories who elected you as their representative for the next three years. On Maltese insistence, however, the further principle was established that, if the elected delegate could not attend a particular meeting, a substitute could be chosen from another country within the group—in this case Malta. Although this compromise may lead to inconvenience and possible embarrassment in the future, it gave considerable satisfaction to the smaller territories. It was agreed that the new Executive Committee should hold its first meeting in Mauritius in June 1968. It was further agreed that the next full Conferences should take place in the Bahamas (1968), Trinidad (1969), Pakistan (possibly) (1970), Australia (1971) and Guyana (1972).

9. It would be wrong to end this account without some reference to the performance of individual delegations. I am happy to say that, in contrast with one or two recent occasions, the United Kingdom delegation was outstanding both in individual performance and in the team spirit which your presence undoubtedly engendered. A measure of your own personal success was the fact that, alone amongst all the overseas delegates, you were asked to join the President and Uganda Ministers at the top table at the final State dinner. Among the other delegates, Mr. Nigel Fisher² played a large part in securing the unity of the delegation and made a distinguished contribution to the debate on Foreign Affairs. In the same debate, Mr. Alex Lyon and Dr. Hugh Gray³ made helpful and patently sincere speeches. The unflinching good-humour and efficiency of the Secretary of the delegation, Mr. Peter Molloy, must also be mentioned. Finally, the fact that you, Sir, attended most of the plenary debates created an excellent impression and was all the more appreciated in

² (Sir) N Fisher (knighted 1974), MP (Con) and former minister at CO/CRO, 1962–1964; Treasurer, CPA, 1966–1968.

³ Lyon and Gray were Labour MPs and Gray was a lecturer in South Asian Politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies from 1970.

view of the fact that you were conducting Government talks on the side and were away from Kampala at the week-end for visits to Arusha and Nairobi.

10. In contrast, the Canadians were without doubt the worst (as well as being the largest) delegation. Their attendance at debates was poor; they made scarcely any contribution of substance to the discussions; they tended to congregate in all-Canadian cliques in their hotel rooms drinking duty-free liquor, and they resolutely refused to mix with the Ugandan or indeed many of the other delegations. For the Australians, Mr. Peter Howson, to whose part I have already referred, made an excellent impression. I am happy to say that neither the Indians nor the Pakistanis referred to the Kashmir dispute, though the Pakistanis distributed large quantities of President Ayub Khan's autobiography. The representatives of Tonga and West Samoa, although not making weighty contributions in debate, probably had the most fun and joined with enthusiasm on every possible occasion in displays of African dancing.

11. The success of the Conference owed much to the enthusiasm and friendliness of the Uganda organisers, which more than made up for their occasional lapses in efficiency. As is probably usual on such occasions, a lot of the organisation was left until well past the eleventh hour. Transport and hotel arrangements, however, which both got off to a sticky start, improved out of all recognition when Mr. Kalimuzo, the Secretary to the Uganda Cabinet, and a specially appointed team of assistants, got into their stride. Herculean efforts were also made behind the scenes by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretariat from London, amongst whom the Secretary-General, Mr. Robin Vanderfelt, was, as usual, outstanding. The fact that the President took a personal interest in the success of the Conference also helped to keep the home team on their toes.

12. To sum up, the Conference was a notable occasion both for Uganda and for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association itself. From the Ugandan point of view, the £50,000 which it cost them was well spent in terms of publicity and goodwill. It has contributed to—as well as providing evidence of—President Obote's developing confidence in his ability to control the internal situation in Uganda. From the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association point of view, it is clear that the Conference went far to restore confidence after the low point reached in the past two or three years. The new Executive Committee should ensure that its affairs are conducted with greater dynamism and good sense in the future. The many personal contacts made and renewed cannot fail to strengthen the feelings of Commonwealth solidarity which undoubtedly burgeoned during the Conference. Finally, from the strictly British point of view, the Conference provided an excellent background for your discussions on Rhodesia, and led to a wider appreciation of both our objectives and our difficulties.

270 FCO 49/107, no 3

15 Nov 1967

[Canada and the monarchy]: letter from Sir H Lintott¹ (Ottawa) to Sir S Garner

After dinner at my house the other evening, Mr. Pearson spoke to me about the problem of the monarchy in Canada, on which he expects to have some conversation with the Queen when he is in London.

¹ See 261, note 1.

His opinions seem to have evolved quite considerably in the last few months. It is clear that he now believes that the days of the monarchy in Canada are numbered,² and that Canada should have her own head of state sooner rather than later. This is a view which has been expressed to me in recent weeks by three or four of his senior Cabinet colleagues and it may well represent a consensus in the Government.

Mr. Pearson told me (in reply to my question) that he expected the position of the monarchy to come up as one of the elements in the forthcoming discussions about the future of the constitution (my telegram No. 1599, paragraph 5). He said that he hoped that when Canada had a President she would be able to retain a closer link with the Monarch than, say, India; for example, the Queen might be known in Canada as 'The Queen, Head of the Commonwealth' and not merely as 'Head of the Commonwealth'.

I asked him what his ideas were about the way in which a President might be appointed. He said he thought the best method might be appointment by the Senate and House of Commons sitting together as an electoral college.

I was not able to probe the reasons for this change of front on Mr. Pearson's part. I have no doubt that the recent increase in tempo of the debate about French Canada, and in particular the prospect of negotiations about the constitution, are the main elements. The replacement of Diefenbaker by Stanfield³ may have encouraged him to think that he can grasp this problem without a major party conflict. But other Ministers who have spoken to me recently also feel, more generally, that the monarchy is no longer suitable to Canada, that it has no appeal for the younger generation, and that it has a divisive rather than a unifying influence in the country as a whole. Mr. Pearson told me that he would be discussing with the Queen a proposal (I had not heard of this before) for a visit by her to British Columbia and Alberta next year. He was disposed to discourage this on the grounds that she might receive an 'over-enthusiastic' reception (i.e. as a political demonstration against Quebec and the East generally).⁴

All this was very confidential, and while he no doubt expected me to report it to you, I think it would be better not to pass this letter on to the Palace. Mr. Pearson said he would try to see Adeane⁵ before his audience with the Queen, and I imagine he would prefer to broach this delicate matter in his own way.⁶

² Upon her accession to the throne after the death of King George VI in Feb 1952, Queen Elizabeth II was separately proclaimed Queen of Canada.

³ J G Diefenbaker (see 252, note 4) was succeeded as leader of the opposition Progressive Conservative Party in Canada by R L Stanfield (leader, 1967–1976).

⁴ Prior to a royal tour of Canada in October 1964 a small revolutionary group of Quebec separatists issued threats intended, not so much to harm the Queen as to force the cancellation of the visit. When the Queen arrived in Quebec she was greeted by indifference and the Canadian authorities were further embarrassed by the heavy-handed police methods used to deal with a small number of demonstrators (Lester B Pearson, *Memoirs* vol 3 1957–1968 (London, 1975) pp 290–299).

⁵ Sir M Adeane, private secretary to the Queen.

⁶ Garner commented that this letter revealed 'a most astonishing change in atmosphere' and he found it 'rather staggering'. Whatever Pearson said he would be opposed by the older generation in Canada with close British ties—in the maritime and prairie provinces, in Ontario, and above all in British Columbia. If Pearson proceeded precipitately there was 'a serious risk of a split right through the middle'. On the other hand, the Quebec question had to be solved and it was becoming increasingly recognised that the monarchy was an obstacle to a solution. With the agreement of the secretary of state, Garner proposed to hold a private talk with Adeane. He thought it would be 'dangerous to circulate anything on this delicate subject' (FCO 49/107, no 4, minute, 17 Nov 1967). Garner's consternation contrasts with the calm manner

in which Adeane and the Queen responded when Pearson raised the matter with them at Buckingham Palace during his visit to London later in Nov 1967. He spoke first with Adeane who 'took all this calmly and agreed that we should give thought to these matters'. In a private audience before an official lunch, the Queen herself raised the matter with Pearson. She was anxious the monarchy 'should not become prejudicial to Canadian unity or a source of division' (Pearson, *Memoirs*, vol 3, pp 300–301).

Pearson's discussion with the Queen followed a royal tour of Canada in June–July 1967 for the centennial celebrations. Lintott reported on the success of the visit (in contrast to that of 1964), and divided Canadian opinion into three categories: loyalists with a strong British connection; those who recognised the constitutional advantages of the monarchical system but who felt a Queen 'over the water' was not really satisfactory for Canadians of non-British origin and particularly French Canadians; and 'out and out opponents of the monarchy as an anachronistic expression of the British connection' living mainly in Quebec. Assuming a sharp decline in numbers of those in his first group, Lintott described the Queen's position in Canada as 'pretty illogical'. He did not expect a serious move for a change but warned, 'if the constitutional future of French–Canada were to come to the boil the constitutional debate about the monarchy might possibly be brought to a head' (FCO 49/68, no 122, letter to Garner, 15 July 1967).

271 FCO 49/110, no 10

29 Feb 1968

[Future of Commonwealth]: centenary address by Mr Thomson at the Royal Commonwealth Society

It is a very great honour and a very great personal privilege for me to have received this invitation to give this talk today during the Centenary Year of the Royal Commonwealth Society. There must, I suspect, also be some special reason for the fact that the Society has asked me to come here on Leap Year's Day. I am not quite sure what this reason is. I know it is always rather dangerous to enter one of these lecture meetings of the Royal Commonwealth Society through the bevy of some of the most attractive young ladies that one finds anywhere in London and that it is perhaps particularly dangerous on Leap Year's Day. But I do hope it is not because the Royal Commonwealth Society feel they can risk inviting me here every 29 February. In any event, Centenary Year and Leap Year together make for a powerful sense of occasion which I find a little daunting, though also challenging.

I want at the outset to pay a sincere tribute—I pay this tribute personally and I also pay it with all the majesterial authority of my Ministerial office that I can deploy on behalf of Her Majesty's Government—to the work of the Royal Commonwealth Society—to the faith in the Empire and Commonwealth it has kept alive these hundred years. And above all to its continued vitality today, the vitality that is evident by the attendance at this meeting. The numerous activities undertaken by the Society have always greatly impressed me. The weekly lunch-time meetings—of which I have long been an attender though this is my maiden speech—the conferences, summer schools and essay competitions which it organises—all these seem to me admirable ways of bringing a greater understanding about the Commonwealth to a wide cross-section of the public; I know too that the work entailed in organising these activities is very exacting and requires much patience and enthusiasm. Earlier this month the Society despatched a party of 15 young men and women from Britain on a month's study visit to India, Pakistan and Ceylon. Most of the party will be having the fascinating experience of visiting the Asian Commonwealth for the first time in their lives. I congratulate the Society upon the success of these many enterprises. I also want to wish the Society a continuing record of enterprise and achievement during the whole of its second century.

A centenary year is a time to think in terms of history and perspective, and that is what I would like to do in offering you some thoughts about the Commonwealth today.

The Commonwealth has a remarkable capacity for change and adaptation, which is worth reminding the pessimists of whom there are not a few these days about the Commonwealth, of that fact. Indeed it is fascinating how the Royal Commonwealth Society itself has shown this remarkable capacity for constructive change, for continually adapting itself to new circumstances. From its origins as the Royal Colonial Institute and then later as the Royal Empire Society it moved as the Commonwealth developed into being the Royal Commonwealth Society.

It was Lord Rosebery,¹ speaking at Adelaide in 1884, who first referred to the British Empire as a Commonwealth of Nations. From the British North America Act of 1867, which brought into being an independent Canada, to the Statute of Westminster in 1931 which defined the status of the 'autonomous communities' who were 'freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations', we have seen this evolution unfold. Then came the further steps in what Mr. Lester Pearson has called 'the process of creative withdrawal' by Britain—the independence in 1947 of India and Pakistan and Ceylon.² Their decision to remain in the Commonwealth upon achieving their independence was a historic one. It created a New Commonwealth in partnership with the Old Commonwealth. Then a decade after these Asian countries became independent, Ghana achieved its independence as the first African independent member of the Commonwealth. Others in Africa, in Asia, in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean quickly followed as the mid 20th century process of decolonisation took its course. All, remarkably, elected to follow the example set by these first Asian members of the Commonwealth of remaining within the Commonwealth association and in a world which rejected an imperial relationship not merely as between Britain and its Empire, but of course the same experience was shared by France and Holland and other European colonial countries, a new relationship, a friendly partnership of equal states came into being. A new step, and one which reaffirmed this new relationship, followed in 1965 with the establishment of the Commonwealth Secretariat. I believe that for a time in the 1880's this Society as the Royal Colonial Institute was a firm believer in what it called a 'Federation between the various components of the Empire'. These dreams had to fade, but in this new Commonwealth machinery, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the machinery for Commonwealth consultation and cooperation, I think a very important reality has taken place.

Now it is not difficult, looking back, to discern these milestones in the evolution of the modern Commonwealth. It is much harder to be clear about where we are now, or to form reliable historical judgments in the midst of events. *Are* we now at another milestone? Are we at a point of decline in the Commonwealth, as so many people sometimes suggest? I think in fact we may very well be at what in the future will be regarded as another milestone in the development of the Commonwealth and I want to tell you why I think this.

I think the future historian may very well identify this milestone as a quite unexpected and as so often happens in history, an enormous contradictory secondary

¹ Liberal politician; foreign secretary in Gladstone's third (1886) and fourth (1892–1894) administrations; prime minister, 1894–1895.

² Ceylon became independent in Feb 1948.

effect of the decisions taken within the last month or two by the British Government, the decision that the right course for Britain in the years ahead in the defence field, was to consolidate her defence forces on Europe and in future to play her part in world affairs, to play her global part from a European base. Mr. Chairman, I am not today going into the political pros and cons of these painful and difficult decisions, since I am trying to see them with the eyes of the historian rather than with those of the politician. The burden of the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs has not been an easy one these last months. But one thing is not in dispute: I think that these decisions I have had to convey to our fellow members of the Asian Commonwealth at the beginning of January have had a shock effect, both in this country and in other Commonwealth countries. And it is from the aftermath of that shock that I think something new may be born, and which could mark the beginning of a new and creative phase in the evolution of the Commonwealth.

I do not wish to under-estimate the degree of disenchantment that at present exists about the Commonwealth. Often in its existence the Commonwealth has been in greater danger of being stifled by platitudes than of being harmed by plain speaking. I recognise that there is disenchantment with the Commonwealth here in Britain. I recognise equally that there is disenchantment in the Commonwealth with Britain—in the African Commonwealth because of the continuation of the Rhodesian rebellion; in the Far Eastern Commonwealth because of our decision to accelerate our withdrawal from Malaysia, from Singapore.

I believe these attitudes of doubt, of disillusion about the Commonwealth, both in Britain and overseas, spring from the fact that the Commonwealth is passing through a period of painful readjustment to the realities of the modern world. A reflection of the experience that this country itself is going through.

Public opinion, on which all that any of us tries to do in the public field in the last resort depends, has always tended to move some way behind contemporary realities. You and I, working in the Commonwealth field, know how true we have all found this to be. There is so often a hangover from the past which confuses thinking about the present. We all know that the British Empire grew—much of it by accident—out of trade, and that once established it was sustained by a world-wide British and naval military power (to which, incidentally, the Empire itself magnificently contributed in the form, for example, of the Indian Army). Let us not for a moment belittle the achievements of that Empire. But the world evolved, and by a voluntary process unique in history, Empire gave way to Commonwealth. Eventual self-government was the accepted goal of colonial policy from the outset, it was one of the great contributions that I think Britain made to many countries in so many parts of the world. But public opinion in this country and in all sections, has been curiously reluctant to accept the final achievement. And I am sure that you have found, as I have, that there are many who pay lip-service to Commonwealth, but who still think in terms of Empire.

And this applies as much to people in the Commonwealth as to people in Britain and in the new Commonwealth as well as in the old Commonwealth. Those Africans for example who still want Britain to use force to bring about a Rhodesian solution are still living as much in the age of Imperial gunboat diplomacy as those Britains who feel that somehow Britain must be able to impose peace in the tragic civil war in Nigeria.

The truth in Rhodesia—and it is an old truth though it was concealed from us for

40 years—is that Britain has responsibility without power. Britain has never controlled the Rhodesian police, the Rhodesian armed forces, the Rhodesian public services. The use of force in Rhodesia would not be a conventional colonial police action. It would be an act of war and I think when people talk about the use of force, they ought to say plainly that what they mean is waging war—war by invasion. It is very easy to start a bush fire in Africa, as everyone in Africa knows, but it is very difficult to know where it will stop once it is started. So it is right in Rhodesia to continue patiently to seek a peaceful solution which will be consistent with the principles laid down by successive British Governments, principles which reflect our obligations to people of all races in Rhodesia.

Equally in Nigeria, the truth which so many concerned people in Britain find difficult to accept is that Britain has no special right to order a solution in Nigeria which is a sovereign independent country.

It is curious how the myth of Britain's military role as a major force in world affairs dies hard. The Right in British politics continues to believe in its heart of hearts if only Britain has the guts to send the gunboat other nations will see the error of their ways. And the British Left believes that if only Britain will refuse to send a gunboat and do it with enough panache, then everyone else will rush to follow our example.

The truth of the matter, my Lord Chairman, is that in the modern world Britain no longer has that kind of military power. But equally the truth in the modern world is that Britain has a good deal of political influence and that political influence in global terms comes particularly through the Commonwealth and if we can come to terms with the limitations and potentialities of Britain's role in the world, of the Commonwealth's role in the world, that then I think its influence may be very productive of good indeed.

It is a widespread misconception that the modern Commonwealth depends on a world-wide British military role. Britain has 25 Commonwealth neighbours. With only two of them do we have formal defence treaties. Only three others are members of one or other of the military alliances to which we ourselves are committed.

For the historian of the future I think the astonishing thing will not be that a British Government decided to withdraw its military bases from South East Asia in 1971, but that we did not do so much earlier. In the days of Imperial power the twin bases were England and India. From India Imperial defence forces could move westward into the Mediterranean or Africa or eastward into Asia or the Pacific. The British possessions to the north west and east of India might be looked upon as Indian outposts, and indeed many of them—Aden, the Malayan settlements, and so on—at one time or another were ruled from Calcutta or later from Delhi.

When India became independent and its large standing army was no longer at the disposal of the Imperial Government, it would have seemed logical to withdraw United Kingdom troops from these outposts. This we did not do because we considered it our duty to bring to independence under our protection the remaining Colonial territories. Militarily this was illogical although politically it was inevitable. In the Far East we had neither the reserves of manpower nor the industrial resources on which to base a military establishment of the kind we had in India. Without these reserves there could be no question of our intervening in Asia or the Middle East on the scale that we had done in the two great wars of this century while at the same time defending the U.K. base with forces in forward positions in Europe.

Our forces change to meet this new pattern and the size of the establishments in Malaysia and Singapore today are in terms of the professional manpower far too small to sustain more than the limited role which they discharged so admirably during the confrontation with Indonesia. And I think some of these realities have been rather obscured by the fact that we continue to think in terms of past patterns rather than in terms of what is happening here and now.

I pause here to make an important distinction. I have been arguing that the future of the Commonwealth as a multi-racial association of peoples does not depend on British bases overseas. It is important that we keep this question quite distinct in our minds from that of Britain's willingness to come to the aid of her partners in the Commonwealth in time of need. That is a different question, which I will not go into here, save to say that within the limits of our economic capacity, the only way that one ever has a strong consistent overseas policy within the limits of our economic capacity, we have no intention of turning our backs on our friends and we shall retain a military capacity to discharge our responsibilities to our friends wherever we feel that we can and should do so.

Let me now revert to my main theme. Is it not possible that a speaker from this platform on the Society's bi-centenary in 2068, may look back and say that in the late 60's and early 70's of the 20th century the Commonwealth came to terms with itself, as it were, and began to know itself for what it really was and could become? That the shock effect of certain decisions by the British Government brought home to people that the reality of the Commonwealth was not something which depended on the comparative military strength of its founder member? And that people then brought a new realism into their thinking about the Commonwealth, and began in earnest to see it not as the new and rather ill-fitting suit worn by the retired policeman, but as something of immediate and contemporary relevance to the problem of how mankind is to live together in peace?

Those of us who have faith in the Commonwealth can help to make the present time this kind of milestone, if we address ourselves to helping this modern Commonwealth expand its spirit and find its destiny. Here is a world role for us to play that looks to the future and not to the past. Britain has an immense contribution to make. I believe this country of ours has a unique inventory of experience, skills and wisdom: and in so many ways the development of the Commonwealth relationship offers us unique opportunities for contributing to development and progress in a contemporary and totally realistic way.

How can we build up these possibilities? In the first place, the Commonwealth is an important association between governments. There is a political job to do, in seeing beyond the many but ephemeral political difficulties of the day, and developing the habit of consultation, and of working together wherever opportunity offers, so as to construct, within the world society, a corpus of understanding and tolerance. There are no headlines in this job. It requires quiet patience and persistence in face of difficulty. But the rewards of perseverance will be great.

But secondly of course the Commonwealth is much more than an association of governments, it would not really have the kind of potentiality that I am seeking to ascribe to it if that were so. It has been remarked, Lord Chairman, that it was far too important and serious a matter to be left to Generals. I do not know how many Generals I have in my audience today, but I hasten to tell them that Commonwealth relations is far too important a matter to be left to governments and certainly to

Commonwealth Secretaries and I am very conscious of this. The Commonwealth is a bridge between peoples. All of us, if we have a mind, can play a part in putting new ingenuity and imagination into multiplying and strengthening the links between the peoples of the Commonwealth. This society, the Royal Commonwealth Society with its great traditions over the century, is already doing a great deal in this field as I said, so are many others: the Commonwealth Foundation—building up the links between professional bodies; the Education Conference which is taking place at Lagos at this moment and I think Commonwealth educational co-operation is of the most tremendous importance. There are all the young people working in Commonwealth countries through bodies like the V.S.O. and the United Nations Association and the International Voluntary Service for Peace. There are the school children who went on the educational cruise to Commonwealth countries in West Africa last month. All power, Lord Chairman, all power to all of these elbows. We need many more of these kind of efforts.

Thirdly, let us back everything and anything that strengthens the common denominators between Commonwealth countries. There was an old Bing Crosby³ song of which the chorus, if I remember rightly, ran 'Accentuate the positive; eliminate the negative'. We could do with some of that in the Commonwealth field. There are a lot of pessimists about, and they are mostly pessimists because they want quick and easy answers to problems to which there are no quick and easy answers and that is one of the facts of international life these days. But there are lots of Commonwealth success stories around. Let us give the Commonwealth achievements at least equal publicity to the Commonwealth problems, and build up a climate of opinion that recognised the potentiality of the Commonwealth Association. All these are part of the task of bringing about an understanding of what the modern Commonwealth is all about. And what I hope will begin to emerge as people start to think realistically about the Commonwealth is a recognition of what—to me—is the supreme justification for a continuing faith in the Commonwealth—the realisation that the Commonwealth exactly corresponds with the needs and problems that are going to dominate the next hundred years of history. The problems of rich and poor, developed and developing, committed and uncommitted, the problems of race and colour—they are all there in our Commonwealth which has a unique opportunity to contribute towards their solution.

There is no guaranteed future for the Commonwealth. There is only the future that we and the other members collectively give it. But this is certain that if there were no Commonwealth the world would be a poorer and more dangerous place. The Royal Commonwealth Society has a hundred years of service behind it to the ideals of an emergent Commonwealth. It has shown great powers of adaptation. It believes it will have many years of worthwhile work ahead of it based on the recognition that the Commonwealth is no longer linked to our military deployment. I ask you to recognise that we are in new territory—a world where reality consists of poverty and hunger, of roads and dams that need building, of children who need to be taught. Who dare say that in this world, to which the Commonwealth offers us an open door, Britain has not a role to play equally as noble as anything in her past history.

³ 1903–1977, popular US singer and film star especially from the 1940s to the 1960s.

272 FCO 49/169, no 39

1 May 1968

[Commonwealth collaboration]: letter from Sir B Trend to Sir M James

I think we agree, as a result of our recent discussions both with the Commonwealth Secretariat and among ourselves, that the time has come to set up some formal interdepartmental machinery to give shape and form to the various suggestions which have been put forward in response to the Prime Minister's wish that we should take one or more fresh initiatives at the forthcoming Meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government.

We have already identified six possible subjects which might provide scope for new or increased Commonwealth collaboration—

- (1) Race relations and the associated questions of immigration and citizenship.
- (2) Population control.
- (3) The law, including the Commonwealth Legal Advisory Service, legal education, training in legislative drafting and periodic meetings of Commonwealth Chief Justices and Law Ministers.
- (4) Youth, including youth exchanges, the VSO scheme etc.
- (5) Agriculture and natural resources, including agricultural education, extension services and research.
- (6) Seminars or informal meetings of senior Commonwealth officials, in their personal capacity and not as representatives of their Governments.

I think that enough preliminary work has now been done on some of these topics to justify our setting up an interdepartmental working party to examine them in greater detail and to search for any other projects which may be suitable for Commonwealth collaboration, with a view to submitting firm proposals to Ministers towards the end of June. For purposes of advance circulation to other Commonwealth Prime Ministers, these need not be elaborated in depth—indeed, there might be some disadvantage in presenting them in too cut-and-dried a form. But we need to be satisfied, for our own purposes, that any project which we sponsor (or give to the Commonwealth Secretariat to sponsor) is realistic and viable; and it should be the purpose of the working party to make sure of this. When they are ready the proposals would, I assume, be put by your Secretary of State to his colleagues on the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee.

We agreed that Michael Rose¹ should take the chair of the working party. The Commonwealth Office, Treasury and Ministry of Overseas Development should clearly be full time members; and other interested Departments should attend according to the subject under discussion. I should be grateful if you and the other recipients of this letter could let me know whom you would wish to nominate as your representative.²

¹ Deputy secretary Cabinet Office.

² This letter was also sent to the Treasury, ODM, HO, Education, Agriculture, Technology, Health, Lord Chancellor's Office, Law Officers Department, Cabinet Office.

273 FCO 24/189, no 115

15 July 1968

'Anglo–Australian relations': briefing note by A H Reed¹ for Mr Thomson's meeting with Sir C Johnston

Sir C. Johnston has been High Commissioner in Canberra since 1965. He is at present on a short visit to the United Kingdom.

2. Our economic and political links with Australia are close. For the first ten months of 1967 she had recovered her traditional position as our second export market after the United States. But our exports to Australia were then badly hit by the dock strike. In the year as a whole, Australia was our fourth largest export market in the world after the U.S.A., West Germany and South Africa. In 1967 we took 13% of her exports. Although the balance of trade is normally in Australia's favour the over-all balance is generally in ours because of our substantial invisible earnings in shipping, insurance, etc.

3. In the present decade Australia's attitude towards us has changed with the realisation that Australia is no longer the last stop but one on a sea-lane running from the U.K. through the Suez Canal. The Australians are now beginning to see themselves as a Pacific power and one effect of our attempt to join the E.E.C. at the beginning of the decade was to bring home to them the need to establish themselves as a Pacific power both politically and commercially. Thus, trading links with Japan have greatly increased and under the previous Prime Minister, Mr. Holt, the conscious policy of making friends with Australia's Asian neighbours was developed.

4. While our first attempt to join the E.E.C. caused grave concern in Australia, our second attempt had comparatively little effect. More substantial was the impact of the changes in our defence policy in the Far East culminating in the January decisions to withdraw completely. The Australian desire to see our forces remain in the Far East was probably based on three broad considerations. The first that we provided a useful counter-poise to the United States without which Australia would be in danger of becoming an American military satellite. The second that our experience of Asia was greater and our approach to its problems subtler than the Americans. Without a military contribution we should forfeit influence both with the countries in the area and with the Americans. The third that the Australians feared that our withdrawal would be an encouragement to the United States to do the same. Mr. Holt, who was a firm believer in a forward defence policy for Australia, subscribed to these views. The new Prime Minister, Mr. Gorton,² has not yet made up his mind. We were, however, at the Five Power Conference in Kuala Lumpur, able to demonstrate our concern in the continuing military stability of the area and did succeed in getting the Australians to undertake to leave forces in Malaysia at least until the time of our withdrawal. The Australians are not likely to decide whether or not to retain these forces after 1971 until they know the results of the U.S. Presidential Elections and the likely turn of events in Viet Nam.

5. There is regret, but possibly no ill-feeling in Australia at our scheme of voluntary restriction on direct investment in Australia at a time of economic expansion in that country and when additional capital is urgently needed. (American

¹ Head of Far Eastern and Pacific Department, Commonwealth Office.

² Prime minister, 1968–1971.

investment is also under restraint.) Portfolio investment continues to flow and the Commonwealth Office has not pressed the Treasury to abandon the voluntary restrictions on investment, which operate for twelve months at a time, in case controls on portfolio investment by individuals were the result.

6. Probably the most serious damage to Anglo/Australian relations has been caused by the British Immigration controls. Australians have been accustomed to coming freely to this country to take up employment or on 'working holidays'. The latter are the modern Australian version of the Grand Tour under which young Australians spend a few years in this country, with visits to Europe, before returning home to make their careers. Now the time that may be spent in Britain is limited to one year initially with the possibility of two extensions of a year at a time. Likewise, those coming to jobs have to wait their turn for many months before they get the necessary Work Permits. Although immigration controls are operated as flexibly as possible, they continue to cause irritation to Australians who have been accustomed to coming and going from the U.K. as though from one Australian State to another. Unfortunately, nothing more can be done without legislation which would necessarily and patently discriminate in favour of white Commonwealth citizens.

274 FCO 24/189, no 123

1 Aug 1968

[Australia]: letter from Sir C Johnston (Canberra) to Sir J Johnston on Mr Gorton and the Commonwealth

As reported in my telegram No. 988 Mr Gorton and his wife dined alone with my wife and me last night to resume contact after our absence on leave.

2. Apart from the discussions about sterling reported in my telegram under reference, the following points of interest came up.

3. Mr. Gorton was in his most Gortonian or 'rogue-elephant' mood. He grumbled a lot about having to go to London for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in January and said at one point '*If I go*'. I told him I thought it most important that he should. He said that he knew exactly what would happen. He would become irritated by the remarks of African representatives about Rhodesia, and would say something which he would afterwards regret. I reminded him that the British Government were determined to allot only the proper amount of time to discussions on Rhodesia. Gorton said: 'What is the point of the Commonwealth anyway?'. I made the standard reply and added that in my own view the Commonwealth was going through a bad patch at present, but that it was essential for us all to work together and keep it going until better times. Experience seemed to show that newly independent ex-colonial territories went through a more or less set period of wildness and irresponsibility, then sobered up and settled down into a more sensible relationship with the world and its problems. In addition, the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference provided an opportunity for meeting a number of important world figures, for example Mr. Trudeau¹ (whom

¹ Pierre Trudeau, prime minister of Canada, 1968–1979, 1980–1984.

I know Gorton wishes to meet). Gorton referred to his exchange of messages with the Prime Minister and said he thought we were trying to get Australia to put more into aid to Commonwealth countries in Africa. He was determined not to do so; as he saw it South East Asia was far more important to Australia than the Commonwealth. His wife, who fancies herself as an expert on Indonesia and its language and customs, sat nodding her approval. I said I was sure that Australia's views about this were fully understood in London; but even looking at South East Asia, it was a great advantage to Australia to have two of its most important countries, Malaysia and Singapore, members of the Commonwealth. I personally knew of no plan to attempt to get Australia to spend more on aid to African Commonwealth countries.

4. I then said that I believed the Prime Minister might wish to invite Mr. Gorton and his wife to visit London quite separately, at some convenient time after the Prime Ministers' Conference. Gorton, characteristically, replied: 'What for, Charles?'. I replied: so that Mr. Gorton could get to know the Prime Minister and members of our Government better and also so that he and his wife could get to know our country and not associate it simply with the duty of attending the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference. I asked if his reaction meant that he would rather not have such an invitation. He replied: 'No, that would be very ungracious of me, but I would have to think about timing, particularly as there may be an early election'. He refused however to be drawn further on a possible date for this.

5. Gorton said he was sure that nothing could stop our two countries drifting further apart. I replied there seemed to be two kinds of drift: unavoidable, due to history and the evolution of Australia into a fully independent country, with its own problems arising from its geographical situation—a process which we in Britain would not want to reverse, and would not be able to if we did; and avoidable, arising from unnecessary rows between our two countries, stupidities in the press at both ends and unnecessary personal frictions. I was sure this kind of drift could be minimized, and regarded it as my job to try and do so. Gorton accepted this without come-back.

6. Throughout the evening Gorton did not refer to the question of defence in South East Asia. I had considered beforehand whether I should bring up with him the question of the present Australian attitude towards the Commander-in-Chief's Advisory Working Groups, but after discussing with my Defence Adviser and others of the staff here had decided not to do so.

7. For me the evening was useful as part of the process of getting to know this strange man better. What particularly struck me was a curious, almost schoolboyish streak of immaturity in him. He would come out with something designed to shock, but would not persist in it once I had done what I could to answer it. He made himself personally extremely agreeable to my wife and me and thanked us repeatedly for inviting him and his wife when we must still be tired from our journey etc.

8. My conclusion is that he is very much worth cultivating and keeping in touch with, and that his anti-Commonwealth or anti-British outbursts need not all of them be taken too seriously. We should, I think, keep in mind the idea of a separate invitation to Gorton to visit London after the P.M.'s Conference, but should not pursue this for the present.

275 FCO 68/160, nos 7 & 8 6 & 15 Jan 1969
 [Value of the Commonwealth]: minutes by Mr MacDonald and N J
 Barrington (FCO) on informal discussions with a group of
 Commonwealth leaders during the 1969 Commonwealth Prime
 Ministers' Conference

Secretary of State

If the proposal for a rather informal talk with a small, representative group of Commonwealth Heads of Government about the future of the Commonwealth is accepted, I suggest that President Obote, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew and Mr. Trudeau should definitely be invited to meet you. The following individuals might also be added: Mr. Gorton and either President Nyerere or President Seretse Khama.¹ Regarding these latter three:—

(a) I do not know Gorton, but am told that if he heard about such a meeting being held without him he would be offended at being excluded from it, which would increase his sense of criticism about the Commonwealth. I am also told that although his contributions to the conversation might not be particularly helpful, the talk could nevertheless (provided it went well) help to impress him with the potential value of the Commonwealth.

(b) Nyerere would be a useful member because of

(i) his intelligent and sincere (if not always agreeable to us) concern to maintain and strengthen the multi-racial Commonwealth,

(ii) his own importance as perhaps the most significant of contemporary African leaders because he may well remain (though he also might not) Tanzania's President for the next dozen years or more, with increasing influence throughout Africa, and

(iii) his presence at the talk may make Obote as well as himself more stimulating and constructive in his interventions in the conversation. On the other hand the presence of those two would give East Africa more than its due representation; and it may be better to select another African from an entirely different region.

(c) For that reason I suggest Seretse Khama as a possible alternative. He is a wise, though not tremendously dynamic statesman in his own right, and it could be useful to hear his thoughts as a representative from Southern Africa, where the most difficult of present-day inter-racial problems exist.

2. I have considered the possibility of Mrs. Gandhi, but on balance have rejected this because

(a) she might not be sufficiently constructive in her attitude,

(b) if the Pakistanis heard about the meeting and about her presence at it, they would resent their exclusion, and

(c) the fact that she will only stay in London for part of the Conference will be a plausible excuse (if one is needed) for her omission.

3. I have also considered the possibility of inviting a Caribbean representative; but none of the Heads of Government there are quite suitable for this select team.

¹ President of Botswana.

Dr. Williams would be the best qualified from some points of view; but the usefulness of his attendance might be dubious.

4. To sum up my suggestions regarding individuals who should be invited to attend, they are:—

<i>Definite</i>	?
Obote	Gorton
Trudeau	Nyerere
Lee Kuan Yew	Seretse Khama

To prevent any idea that we British are trying to dominate the discussion, I think that only one of our Ministers should attend.

5. The occasion should be a wholly 'working' one, although informal and relaxed. That being the case, probably the best occasion for it would be for, say, a couple of hours over drinks one evening. It would probably be best to hold it towards the end of the Conference, when the talk could be in the light of the discussions at Malborough House.

6. If the suggestion of such a meeting is worth pursuing, it should not be fixed without an informal sounding of at least one or two of those suggested above, to check whether they would welcome the idea, and would agree to attend. The first person whom it would be prudent to sound is Obote. If desirable, I could broach the matter with him informally and personally in the first instance.

M.M.
6.1.69

It so happens that among those Heads of Government invited to the Secretary of State's dinner party at Dorneywood² on Saturday, 11 January were several of the key figures with whom Mr. Malcolm MacDonald had suggested (in his minute of 6 January) that it might be fruitful to discuss the future of the Commonwealth. Unfortunately President Nyerere and Mr. Lee Kuan Yew fell out through sickness and only Mr. Trudeau and Sir Seretse Khama from among those suggested by Mr. Malcolm MacDonald were present, together with Dr. Olivier³ and Mr. Harlley.⁴ Mr. Thomson, Lord Caradon and Sir L. Monson were also present.

2. Nevertheless, with Mr. Malcolm MacDonald's minute of 6 January in mind, the Secretary of State initiated, when the ladies had withdrawn after dinner, a discussion on the value of the Commonwealth. The discussion was mainly a dialogue between himself and Mr. Trudeau, who was obviously turning over in his mind the whole question of the value of the Commonwealth as a whole and to Canada in particular. Mr. Trudeau maintained that the Commonwealth represented nothing unique: it could be compared with the United Nations or with the nations united by their use of the French language, i.e. la Francophonie. He agreed that Britain was more a power among equals in the Commonwealth than was France among the Francophonie nations. General de Gaulle used the latter to build up his own power and prestige and would never agree to criticism in the way that the British had done over Rhodesia. But nevertheless the Commonwealth was principally an historic accident. But it was a club that existed and there was, he agreed, no reason not to keep it going. He seemed however to be definitely opposed to greater institutionalisation, remarking that

² National Trust mansion and estate in Buckinghamshire at the disposal of secretaries of state or ministers of the Crown for official purposes.

³ Prime minister of Malta.

⁴ John Harlley, inspector-general of police, Ghana, and one of three members of a presidential commission presiding over Ghana's transition from military to civilian rule.

perhaps the greatest value of the Commonwealth lay not in what members had in common but the fact that 'au fond' they had so little in common.

3. When pressed about whether the present meeting had been useful to him and worth giving up two weeks of his time for, Mr. Trudeau said that he thought it had been worthwhile. It was immensely valuable to have personal impressions of so many world leaders; a great help to know the people with whom he was dealing in international affairs. The atmosphere was of course very different from the United Nations. When asked subsequently whether he would attend future Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meetings, Mr. Trudeau said that he would.

4. Mr. Trudeau said that Canada could, of course, like other countries, withdraw from the Commonwealth if she wished to, but he asked the Secretary of State about whether this was also true of Britain. Did we perhaps see the Commonwealth as a continuation of our former Empire and an important way of boosting our prestige in international affairs?

5. The Secretary of State said that purely in the short term one could argue that the Commonwealth was disadvantageous for Britain. In the long run however he thought it was a force for good in the world. He admitted that British people like himself liked to think that what their nation had created in the past had been on the whole to the benefit of mankind rather than the reverse. He did believe this to be true of the Commonwealth which could be a force for good in the world. Although the various member countries and their interests were diverse, discussion at the meeting had shown that they shared the common belief that racialism was wrong. He would have liked to think that they also shared common standards about democratic government. In some Commonwealth countries the Westminster style of democracy had temporarily given way to more autocratic regimes, but democracy remained for them an ideal towards which they were working. He believed that although racialism was probably the worst form of tyranny other forms of tyranny were also evil. He hoped that the Commonwealth could help the world by establishing some standards in this respect.

6. Mr. Trudeau commented that Mr. Stewart's views seem idealistic but he appeared to be impressed by the conviction expressed in the views round the table, that the Commonwealth was, in some inexplicable way, worthwhile. For instance Sir Seretse Khama said that he did not know what the value of the Commonwealth was, but he did know that any country was free to leave it, which suggested that the present members saw some value in the association. Mr. Harley of Ghana said that it would not be a disaster for his country if it were no longer in the Commonwealth. But he thought it did some good, if only because the political development of the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia provided a good example to the people of developing countries about how to organise their own affairs. He stressed that oppression could exist not only among people of different races but among people of the same colour, the same race and even the same tribe. Dr. Borg Olivier, in broken English and after plaintively remarking that it was something not to feel alone in the world, emphasised the value of the English language as a bond between nations. Like the Latin he had learned at school this enabled him to understand the thoughts and motivations of his colleagues in many other countries.

7. Although there was no conclusion to the discussion I think all those present had the impression that such an exchange of views was valuable.

276 FCO 59/571, no 5A

29 May 1970

'Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference': minute by C C C Tickell¹ on 'constructive' ideas that might emerge from the Singapore conference

The Permanent Under Secretary asked for ideas about what might come out of the forthcoming Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference.

2. The trouble about producing ideas which are interesting, constructive and inexpensive is that the search has been on for about 20 years and all the obvious ones have already been found, exploited and by and large judged inadequate. It seems to me that we should now look at the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in a different way. One of the reasons why the other members of the Commonwealth find it a slightly tatty organisation is that they regard it as a sort of British responsibility or even an obligation towards them. The older and whiter members remember the Commonwealth or rather Empire as an enterprise in which they had a minority but profitable shareholding; and the newer, darker ones feel obscurely that Britain should be morally obliged to pay for her imperialism by providing whatever sort of aid, protection or help they may require at any particular moment. By producing ideas to keep the Commonwealth a going concern and generally assuming, even unconsciously, a special responsibility for aid, we tend to confirm the role that the others expect of us, and thus frustrate the evolution of the Commonwealth into the sort of organisation we frequently claim it should be.

3. My own feeling is therefore that we should—

(a) Avoid putting forward any bright new ideas of our own, but rather discreetly encourage others to put forward their own ideas. This could be done either on a Government-to-Government basis or through the Commonwealth Secretariat. The result might be to make the Prime Ministers Conference less manageable from our point of view, but this would be a price we should have to expect. The fact that the Conference is taking place for the first time outside Britain anyway makes it an occasion we should not seek to stage-manage too obviously in our own interests;

(b) If we do feel obliged to put subjects on the agenda, make them as hard and practical as possible, indicating quite clearly the British as much as the Commonwealth interest. My only thought in this field, which is prompted by the current nationalisation of British property in Uganda and the various threats to British commercial interests elsewhere, from Malawi to Ceylon, is that we should propose a Commonwealth Code of Conduct or insurance scheme by which countries which harbour investment, both industrial and commercial, from other Commonwealth countries, should subscribe to an arrangement which laid down the terms and compensation of expropriation and expulsion. Some of the developing countries might not like such a proposal, but on consideration and depending on how it was presented to them, they might well see it as something in their interest and likely in the long term to increase the flow of trade and investment between Commonwealth countries. Such a proposal would also serve

¹ Diplomatic Service, private secretary to successive chancellors of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1970–1972, charged with negotiating Britain's EEC entry; chef de Cabinet to president of European Commission, 1977–1981; UK permanent representative to UN, 1987–1990; knighted 1983 (Sir Crispin Tickell).

to remind them that they cannot on one side continually ask for more aid and investment and on the other, when it suits their political fancy, expropriate foreign properties and thus make the flow of virtually anything but Government-financed aid all but impossible. Please forgive me if this particular proposition has already been submitted and found wanting.

277 PREM 15/279, no 5

22 Dec 1970

'Declaration about the Commonwealth': minute by Sir A Douglas-Home to Mr Heath on an African initiative ahead of the Singapore Prime Ministers' Conference. *Annex*

I have been looking closely at this African initiative. A great deal turns on the motives behind it. Comments from our High Commissioners in Lusaka and Dar-es-Salaam suggest that President Nyerere at least sees it as something which

- (i) will establish his own concern for the Commonwealth;
- (ii) would give us an excuse not to sell arms;
- (iii) would put him in the clear and the blame on us, if he walked out after a decision by us to sell, and this started a landslide of withdrawals.

2. Our High Commissioner sees no change in President Nyerere's basic determination to withdraw in response to an unwelcome decision by us.

3. I think we must conclude, therefore, that for President Nyerere, and no doubt President Kaunda, this is a move at least partly designed to obstruct our arms policy, and to provide us, rather than them, with a face-saver.

4. But this initiative is two-edged. Not all other African Commonwealth Governments are necessarily prepared to be as hard-line as Nyerere. There is more than a chance that, at the end of the day, they together with most, if not all, of the others, could be brought to see a declaration preserving the Commonwealth as more important than walk-outs over a single issue of disagreement.

5. Nyerere rightly estimates that it would be difficult for us not to subscribe to a Declaration of this kind. I recommend that we should turn this to our advantage, and perhaps isolate him, by going along with it, subject to changes of wording to which he in turn would find it difficult to object.

6. The Declaration as it stands is for the most part unexceptionable. (I attach a copy for reference). Paragraph 7 has obvious traps which

- (a) blur the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other Governments and
- (b) have implications about our arms policy.

But it should not be impossible for us to find appropriate amendments to remove these.

6. [sic] I suggest that we have everything to gain by being seen by Commonwealth governmental opinion—or more publicly if this initiative is leaked beyond the Heads of Government circle—to be taking a positive attitude at the start. I do not see why we should leave President Nyerere and President Kaunda to appear more concerned with the Commonwealth than we are. I therefore attach a draft

telegram to Ottawa.² It shows that we accept in principle the idea of a Declaration and suggests amendments in key passages which I think will accord with the Canadians' own inclinations. Nyerere's and Kaunda's reaction to them will be instructive, and give us a clearer idea of their position.

7. I saw the Australian and New Zealand High Commissioners yesterday to explain our intentions over the sale of arms. I thought it wise to let them know about this latest development. They both thought paragraph 7 of the draft Declaration objectionable as it stands. Sir Denis Greenhill, who was seeing Mr. Arnold Smith, has also let him know that this is something at which we were prepared to take a close look as a declaration of aims and principles, provided it was not intended to prevent ourselves or any other member acting in what we believed to be in our own best interests. Mr. Smith, who said that he had heard of the initiative, but disclaimed any hand in it, took the point.

8. I am sending a copy of this minute to Sir Burke Trend.

Annex to 277: Text of proposed declaration

1. The Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary association of sovereign states consulting and co-operating in the common interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding in the cause of world peace.

2. Members of the Commonwealth come from all six continents, embrace each of the major faiths, include peoples of different colours and all racial groups, display every stage of economic development from poor developing nations to wealthy industrialised states. They reveal a rich variety of cultures, traditions and institutions.

3. Despite this diversity all members of the Commonwealth hold certain concepts in common. It is by pursuing collectively the principles arising from these concepts that the Commonwealth can continue to influence international society for the benefit of mankind.

4. We believe that international peace and order are essential to the security of the world's peoples: we therefore support the United Nations and all efforts to strengthen its authority as a mediator and its endeavours to remove the causes of strife between peoples.

5. We believe in the liberty of the individual, in his/her right to participate in framing the society in which he/she lives and in equal rights for all citizens: we therefore strive to extend representative institutions and the rule of law throughout our nations.

6. We believe that the wide contrasts in wealth now existing between different sections of the world's population offend social justice and can endanger world peace: we therefore seek to use our collective efforts in fighting poverty, ignorance and disease, in raising standards of life and achieving a more equitable international society.

7. We recognise racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil of society and racial prejudice as a dangerous sickness threatening the healthy development of the human race: we therefore seek every means of combating these scourges: we shall deny all regimes which practise them any assistance which can consolidate or strengthen them. We are committed to the principles of human equality and dignity, self-

² Not printed.

determination and non-racialism and will use all our collective and separate efforts to implement them.

8. We believe that international co-operation is essential to remove the causes of war, combat injustice and secure development amongst the peoples of the world: we are convinced that the Commonwealth is one of the most fruitful associations for these purposes.

9. In pursuing these principles the members of the Commonwealth believe that their collective endeavours provide a constructive example of the multi-national approach which is vital to peace and progress in the modern world. The association is based on consultation, discussion and co-operation, rejecting coercion as an instrument of national policy. At the same time it recognises that the security of each member state from external aggression is a matter of common concern to all members. It provides many trans-national channels for constant exchanges of knowledge and views on professional, cultural, economic, legal and political issues. These relationships we intend to foster and extend: for we believe that our multi-national association can expand human understanding, outlaw racial discrimination, help to achieve higher ways of life and provide a powerful influence for peace between nations.

278 PREM 15/277

19 Jan 1971

[Singapore Prime Ministers' Conference]: record of meeting of prime ministers or those representing them without advisers on South African arms

After some initial discussion as to why the restricted meeting (i.e. with no officials) had been called, in which it was clear that a number of Commonwealth leaders were not clear about the purpose of the meeting, *Mr. Shearer*¹ (Jamaica) said that he had made the proposal for a restricted meeting in the hope that private discussion could lead to a change of attitudes which would be reflected in subsequent discussions with advisers present. He had been in touch with the United Kingdom and also with some of the Africans and Caribbeans. It had to be recognised that the British Government's policy on the sale of arms had been part of the Conservative Party Election Manifesto, and the Government was to that extent committed. The United Kingdom should be given credit for carrying out the consultations which they had held with the Commonwealth. The other members of the Commonwealth were not against the United Kingdom maintaining the Simonstown Agreement. Their fear was, however, that arms supplied to South Africa would be used against the Africans and also that the sale of arms might confer 'respectability' on the South African Government. He could not see how, if they were selling arms to South Africa, the United Kingdom could support U.N. action against South Africa. The problem was how to meet the United Kingdom's defence needs by means which did not strengthen South Africa. *Mr. Foray*² (Sierra Leone), *Dr. Busia*³ (Ghana) and *Sir Dawda Jawara*⁴ (The Gambia) all said that they welcomed the meeting. *Mr. Foray* said that there was a need for a detailed exposé of all aspects of the United Kingdom Government's position.

¹ H Shearer, prime minister of Jamaica.

² C P Foray, minister for external affairs, Sierra Leone.

³ Dr K A Busia, prime minister of Ghana.

⁴ President of Gambia.

The Prime Minister then made a full statement from the notes which are annexed to this record. He told the meeting that the British Government was under a legal obligation to provide the South African Navy with spare parts, seven Wasp helicopters and two frigates. This was followed by a number of questions on the Prime Minister's statement by other Commonwealth leaders.

*Mr. Burnham*⁵ (Guyana) asked whether the United Kingdom Government would be able to monitor the use of equipment sold to South Africa. What would the Government do if the South Africans used the equipment for offensive purposes?

*Dr. Arikpo*⁶ (Nigeria) asked what would happen if South Africa attacked an African state. He said that the South Africans had already used Buccaneers supplied by Britain against freedom fighters. He asked whether all that was in question was defence of the Indian Ocean or was the United Kingdom concerned also with defence of the South Atlantic.

*Mr. Phillips*⁷ (Trinidad and Tobago) asked what was the point in holding consultations at all if the obligation for the United Kingdom to sell arms to South Africa was a legal obligation. He also raised again the question of what the United Kingdom would do if British arms were used to attack an African country.

*Mr. Barrow*⁸ (Barbados) asked whether it was the Agreement or the Base which mattered.

Mr. Shearer (Jamaica) asked for clarification of the obligations under the Agreement. What equipment was the United Kingdom obliged to sell to keep the Agreement in being? *Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam*⁹ (Mauritius) asked about the position with regard to the United Nations' embargo on the sale of arms to South Africa.

*Prince Dlamini*¹⁰ (Swaziland) said that he understood that the British Labour Government had not supplied arms under the Agreement. The South African Government had nonetheless allowed the agreement to continue.

The Prime Minister, replying to the questions which had been raised, said that we had a naval officer at Simonstown and we were able to know what was going on. If the South Africans used arms which we had supplied for offensive purposes, the supply of further arms would be cut off and we would have to [find] alternative facilities. With regard to an attack on an African country, in Nigeria and in East Africa, the British Government had made clear its readiness to give assistance when requested, and their concern for the wellbeing of African countries. *The Prime Minister* said he knew of no evidence of Buccaneers being used against Freedom Fighters. On the question of whether we had in mind defence of the Indian Ocean only, or whether we were concerned also with the South and West Atlantic, he said that NATO had never been extended into the South Atlantic, though this had been discussed from time to time. The facilities at Simonstown were of concern to us in connection with both the Indian Ocean and the South Atlantic. Referring to the question by Mr. Phillips, he said that, while certain of our obligations under the Simonstown Agreement were legal obligations, our overall obligations went wider than that. It was not the case that the Labour Government had not continued with

⁵ F Burnham, prime minister of Guyana, see 303, note 3.

⁶ Dr Okoi Arikpo, external affairs commissioner, Nigeria.

⁷ K Hudson-Phillips, minister for external affairs, Trinidad.

⁹ Prime minister of Mauritius.

⁸ E Barrow, prime minister of Barbados.

¹⁰ Prime minister of Swaziland.

the Agreement. In so far as the South Africans had not renounced the Agreement in the face of the Labour Government's refusal of arms supplies, it was because they had foreseen the possibility of a change of Government in the United Kingdom. Referring to Mr. Barrow's question, the *Prime Minister* said that the Base and the Agreement were interlocked and we were concerned with both.

President Kaunda (Zambia) then spoke to say that the issue was very complicated. He commended President Nyerere's pamphlet which had been distributed at the Conference. Zambia wanted to see the Commonwealth continue. There was, however, a failure to recognise that there was now a new Africa. He mentioned the refusal of Western governments to assist with their railway project. He then spoke in familiar terms of the war which was already going on in Southern Africa and accused the Portuguese Government of using chemical warfare in Angola. *Mr. Lee Kuan Yew* (Chairman) challenged this. He said that if the Portuguese were using chemicals in Africa they must have been supplied them by the Americans. He did not believe this was so. *President Kaunda* did not reply.

Mr. Lee went on, in a somewhat confused statement, to urge the need to face facts. He foresaw the presence of both the Russians and the United States in Singapore and appeared to welcome this as the best means of keeping out the Chinese.

President Banda (Malawi) said that Mr. Wilson had been on the point of resuming arms sales to South Africa when political pressure had prevented him from doing so.

*Vice President Moi*¹¹ (Kenya) questioned whether South Africa would help to deal with Soviet confrontation. He asked whether, if the British Labour Party returned to power, they would reverse the United Kingdom Government's policy.

*Chief Jonathan*¹² (Lesotho) said that he was the only member of the Conference who spoke with first-hand knowledge of apartheid. He thought that the only way to deal with it was through dialogue. Apartheid was an impracticable system which could not work. He went on to refer to the threat of Soviet subversion in Lesotho.

Mr. Shearer (Jamaica) again raised what arms the British Government actually had to sell to South Africa. Was it possible for us instead to deploy our own vessels? *The Prime Minister* replied that we were not in a position to take the place of the South African navy.

Dr. Arikpo (Nigeria) said that the Conference should try to reach an accommodation. He reminded his colleagues that in 1955 none of the African countries was independent. He did not believe that the British Government had any remaining legal obligations under the Simonstown Agreement. The then British Government had stated in 1964 that there were no substantial obligations under the Simonstown Agreement. There might be moral obligations under the Agreement but the United Kingdom should also have regard for their moral obligations towards black Africa. He suggested that there should be discussions with all [who] might be affected.

The Prime Minister said that the Simonstown Agreement had never been an agreement for the defence of southern Africa. It dealt purely with the sea routes. He knew nothing about the statement of 1964 which Dr. Arikpo had mentioned.

¹¹ Daniel arap Moi, minister of home affairs, Kenya, 1964–1967; vice-president, 1967–1978; president, 1978–2002.

¹² Chief Leabua Jonathan, prime minister of Basutoland/Lesotho from 1965 (see 295, note 6).

*Mr. Swaren Singh*¹³ (India) asked what dangers the Simonstown Agreement was aimed against. The Indian Government wanted to see the Indian Ocean kept free of all the powers. He questioned where the United Kingdom Government's commitment would end. *The Prime Minister* replied that he was offering to limit the British commitment to sell arms. What we were concerned with was replacement of equipment and maintenance of the operational efficiency of the South African Navy. The danger we had to face was the Russian presence.

President Obote spoke to say that he saw no change in the British Government's position. The Russians were becoming entrenched in the U.A.R., Somalia and the Sudan, adjacent to Uganda. They (Uganda) felt themselves under threat. Meanwhile the United Kingdom seemed to be supporting the southern tip of Africa against the rest and this was assisting Soviet penetration. He asked whether the United Kingdom Government had discussed their policies with the French, German and Italian Governments.

The Prime Minister said that the British Government were not asking for agreement to their policies but only for recognition of their position. The purpose of the discussions was to hear what other members of the Commonwealth had to say. Our position had been considerably modified as a result of the representations which had been made to us. It was not true that we were supporting the southern tip of Africa against the rest; rather the reverse. With regard to Soviet penetration and the argument that the sale of arms to South Africa assisted this process, *the Prime Minister* pointed out that French sale of arms to South Africa had not led to Soviet advance in the French African countries.

Mr. Lee Kuan Yew (Chairman) suggested that there were three choices before the Conference; to establish a Committee; to move immediately to a plenary session and continue the discussion there; or to meet again the next day.

In further discussion of the first of these alternatives, it emerged that this was an idea which had been put forward by Dr. Arikpo. *Dr. Arikpo* confirmed this and said the proposal was for a Committee to study the trade routes. *Mr. Foray* (Sierra Leone) said this was an interesting proposal and inquired how the Committee would be set up.

Mr. Lee Kuan Yew (Chairman) said it would be necessary to decide on the composition. There would need to be balanced geographical representation, with Africa, the Caribbean and Asia all represented. He thought that Singapore would wish to serve and possibly Malaysia also. He asked for the United Kingdom's views.

The Prime Minister said that he would like to think about the matter. It clearly raised constitutional questions. He emphasised that British policy must be a British responsibility, which could not be delegated to a Commonwealth Committee. The establishment of such a Committee did not accord with normal Commonwealth practice.

Mr. Foray (Sierra Leone) then suggested that the Prime Minister had rejected the proposal for a Committee. *Mr. Lee* said this was not so. Referring to references which had been made to a break up of the Commonwealth, he commented that even if only the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and New Zealand remained there would still be a quorum.

After some further discussion as to how the Conference should proceed it was then decided to adjourn and to resume the restricted session the following day.

¹³ Foreign minister, India, 1970–1974.

279 PREM 15/277

3 Feb 1971

'Visit to Singapore': minute by P J S Moon¹ to Mr Heath

I have asked all concerned to record their personal impressions of your visit to Singapore. The following are my own.

Cyprus

I was greatly impressed by the Sovereign Base areas, which I had not seen before. No doubt there are good political reasons for saying little about them, but I think if more were known, there would be greater pride. There may be a case for doing more to educate that part of the public mind which tends to think that we have nothing worth while left in the defence field overseas anyway, and therefore it is better to opt out altogether.

India and Pakistan

In both countries I had a strong impression not of Governments dealing with problems but of Government having become the main problem itself. Perhaps this was inevitable given the constitutional situation in Pakistan and the forthcoming elections in India. But, in two countries so beset by domestic problems of all kinds—quite apart from their political problems—it was depressing to hear so little talk of practical measures to deal with them and to sense so little enthusiasm.

What is it about the Indians which causes them to have such bad relations with almost all their neighbours—Pakistan, Nepal, China? The Indians seem to me to have a frightening blindness to any viewpoint but their own, which will always make them very difficult to deal with.

With regard to our own relations with the sub-continent, I detected a real anxiety in both Pakistan and India not to see links severed. I doubt however that this will be translated into practical action by either country to do much to foster these links on their side. The effort will have to come from us.

The Kashmir dispute was even more all pervasive than I had expected. It seems to be only a matter of time before it flares up again unless something is done.

Malaysia

The comparative prosperity and sense of purpose of Malaysia was refreshing after Pakistan and India. But the present Malay leadership does not inspire much confidence. To me both Tun Razak and Tun Ismail² had the air of sick men conserving their energies. At the plenary meeting which you had in Kuala Lumpur, the articulate and persuasive Chinese Finance Minister, Tan Siew Sin, stood out in contrast. I am sure that, if we are going to keep Malaysia up to the mark, it is vital that the Five Power defence arrangements are *seen* to be effective. I suggest there will need to be a carefully handled public relations exercise to ensure that the nature and extent of these arrangements are well understood in Malaysia.

Singapore

I had not visited Singapore since 1963 and I found it changed out of all recognition. I would guess that the discipline imposed by Mr. Lee Kuan Yew suits the majority of

¹ See 253.

² Prime minister and deputy prime minister of Malaysia respectively.

Singaporeans and there is not yet a serious degree of resentment. On the other hand I found stories of Mr. Lee Kuan Yew's minor eccentricities very widespread. I therefore see danger in the longer term of Mr. Lee becoming increasingly isolated and autocratic and eventually producing a violent reaction.

The Commonwealth Conference

Like everyone else, I kept having to remind myself I was not in New York.

Comparing their performances on other similar occasions, Presidents Kaunda and Nyerere seemed to me to have diminished in stature. A good deal of the shine has gone off and neither seems to have developed real weight and 'gravitas'. It struck me that neither was heard by the Africans with the same kind of almost tribal respect which I recall being given to President Kenyatta and the Abubakar.

The overall impression I received was one of general boredom with the Conference and anxiety to get through without damage to bilateral relations, particularly with us. I did not even get the impression that Presidents Kaunda, Nyerere and Obote had their hearts in it.³ No doubt a surfeit of conferences—U.N., O.A.U., non-aligned—has its effect.

³ Heath commented in the margin: 'They realised they were not going to get their own way.'

280 FCO 24/1210, no 41

4 Mar 1971

'The Commonwealth prime ministers' meeting: 14–22 January 1971': circular letter from Sir A Douglas-Home to all posts. *Annexes*

[Heath was not enthusiastic about attending the Singapore meeting. He did not want himself or his delegation 'pigging' it in a hotel and wanted his own house with air conditioning. He also wanted discussion of concrete schemes, not airy thoughts about the Commonwealth over the next ten years, and he was concerned to limit Britain's financial contribution to Commonwealth programmes (PREM 15/275). An FCO brief for the meeting commented: 'The paradox of the Commonwealth is that it works on two levels. At one level it is a world-wide complex of positive and valued working relationships in almost all fields of human activity, relatively unaffected by passing changes in government attitudes. But it is also an association of independent nation-states acting in their own interests, and subject to the stresses and strains of contemporary political differences.' To date the Commonwealth had survived these differences and the key issue was whether this would continue. It was no bad thing to have a 'crunch' at Singapore. 'Heads of Government will have to make a clear unsentimental assessment of the value of the Commonwealth to them. It could be a turning point of maturity' (PREM 15/276, PMMS(1)(71)(1), Dec 1970).]

The Prime Minister made a statement to Parliament on 26 January about the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting and answered a number of supplementaries (Official Report columns 321 to 336 and Verbatim numbers 26/71 and 27/71). The Communiqué issued at the end of the Meeting and the Commonwealth Declaration agreed at the Meeting were also incorporated in that Report (columns 336 to 340), but are annexed to this despatch for ease of reference. These form the published commentary and record of the Meeting. During the Conference brief telegrams reporting each day's discussions were sent to all Commonwealth posts and to some others. You will since also have received Guidance telegram No. 22. What follows is a more general account of how the Conference went from our point of view and how I now assess the position.

2. This was the largest Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting ever held. With the accession to full membership during 1970 of Tonga, Western Samoa and Fiji 31 countries were represented, all but six at Head of Government level. It was also the first full Conference outside London, the January 1966 Conference in Lagos being concerned only with Rhodesia.

3. We went to Singapore expecting a difficult Meeting dominated by the issue of our proposed sale of maritime defence equipment to South Africa. We had certain specific aims in view. In general, we wished to ensure that the Commonwealth did not break up and, to this end, to get the Meeting to accept that the association should not be put at risk because of disagreement between some of its members over a single policy decision. In particular, we aimed to get the Meeting to acknowledge that members of the Commonwealth were free to take whatever decisions they considered to be necessary in their own assessment of their vital national interests. In practical terms, we wanted to try to separate the issue of maritime defence from attitudes to apartheid and to secure some recognition that our arms policy was based on genuine strategic considerations. Virtually all of these aims were fulfilled. In the process threats of immediate withdrawal died away and the Commonwealth emerged intact.

4. The course of events was interesting. It had been our fear that the Conference would launch itself straight into bitter controversy about the arms question. We had hoped to put off its discussion until the item proposed by Ceylon on the Security of the Indian Ocean was reached some time in the second week. But threats emerged to this. A Tanzanian proposal was made a week before the Conference to bring to the top of the Agenda those items on which African opposition to our policies could be expected to be expressed. And President Kaunda produced his draft Declaration on Commonwealth Principles¹ which seemed designed to prevent any arms sales to South Africa and which also found advocates for its discussion in the opening sessions of the Meeting. Both matters were discussed at the meeting of officials on the day before the Conference opened and at the opening session. In the event, it proved possible to secure agreement that the traditional opening items involving general discussions of world political and economic matters should be retained and that a new item on 'The problems of Southern Africa' should follow. It was also agreed that President Kaunda should introduce his draft Declaration on the first day but that discussion should be held over until the much later item on 'The Commonwealth in the 'Seventies'. As it happened the draft was promptly referred to a Committee of Officials so that its controversial points were soon being aired. Nevertheless, the agreed Agenda order ensured Heads of Government two or three days of relatively non-controversial discussion in Plenary and, with the week-end, an opportunity for quiet preliminary exchanges outside the Meeting on the central arms issue.

The arms issue in restricted session

5. Even so, it became clear during the two general discussions that the habit of delivering set speeches—and of making not only the content but the text freely available to the Press—was likely to inhibit, if not prevent, any kind of fruitful exchanges on the arms issue. Once Heads of Government had put their positions on

¹ See 277.

record they would be committed. For this reason Mr. Shearer promoted the suggestion that Heads of Government should discuss the southern African item in private session without officials except for the Commonwealth Secretary-General. This restricted session lasted for two full days. It provided an opportunity for something more like the traditional style of confidential discussion and debate which had up till then been virtually non-existent. No records were taken and secrecy was respected.² During this discussion the Prime Minister was able to reiterate that we saw the sale of maritime arms to South Africa solely in the context of our defence commitments and in no way to be interpreted as condoning the apartheid policies of the South African Government. He was also able to explain the provisions and implications of the Simonstown Agreement, on which some African Heads of Government appeared strangely ill-informed.

The Study Group

6. From these confidential exchanges eventually emerged the proposal for an eight-nation Study Group to consider the problems of the maritime trade routes of the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans. This was not an unsatisfactory outcome. The idea of some specialist or ministerial committee to look at the defence implications of the situation in the area had been in the air for some months. The Conference discussions, and a growing recognition by some of our partners that there might be something in these wider factors after all, made the proposal a practical and acceptable possibility for the first time. It also provided a respectable way of terminating discussion of the arms issue at the Meeting, without reaching the point of direct challenge or showdown.

7. In discussion at the end of the restricted session the Prime Minister made it plain that he regarded British acceptance of the Study Group as in no way imposing any limitation on our freedom of action. He also spelled out the legal obligations under the Simonstown arrangements which we saw ourselves as having to fulfil should South Africa so insist. (These reservations, together with an assurance about South African use of any arms and equipment, and our attitude in the event of any breach of this, were repeated and put publicly on record later.) Our critics first held the view that our insistence on fulfilling these obligations would make the Study Group a farce and that therefore no arms should be sold while it was sitting. The Prime Minister made it plain that he could not accept such conditions. They would only serve to recreate, after the six months period being suggested, the situation we were facing in Singapore. The moderate Africans accepted the position and moved behind the proposal as a means of breaking the deadlock, so that finally, with Dr. Arikpo declaring himself ready to sponsor the suggestion as his own, the East Africans agreed to the establishment of the Group. This meant a considerable and significant movement from original positions. Some member countries, in particular India, made reservations of their own about their understanding of the terms of reference of the Group. Given developments since, the Study Group may not come to anything; but even so and for whatever reasons agreement may have been given, the Group was established; and to that extent it can be claimed that those concerned accepted the relevance of the trade and defence factors in the arms issue.

8. Australia, Britain, Canada, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia and Nigeria were

² But see 278.

appointed members of the Study Group and it was left to the Commonwealth Secretary-General to take soundings of the members to decide the questions of time, place and the level at which meetings should be held.

9. Our critics were not content with having expressed their views in the long restricted session, about the content of which they had been surprisingly and admirably discreet. They insisted on a further full session of the Meeting, which began late on Wednesday evening of 20 January and lasted over eight hours during which they put on record in a series of set speeches (and handed out to the Press, for the benefit of their public at home) their absolute rejection of any sales. It was not a pleasant experience. All the bitterness which had been building up in the pressure of seeking for a compromise, all the frustration and tiredness, fused into a session full of harsh and extreme words. The leaders of the Caribbean delegations, and notably Mr. Burnham, were to the fore in this.

The Commonwealth declaration

10. At the same time this seemed to serve as a catharsis of the emotions. The aftermath was a mixture of exhaustion and relief. One hurdle remained, the wording of the Commonwealth Declaration. In Committee officials had agreed some amendments. Many of our own suggestions were among those accepted. But there was deadlock on the crucial paragraph about racial discrimination and, in particular, on the 'assistance' clause within it. A Guyanese amendment removed some objectionable phrasing, such as the open-ended commitment to use 'every means' to combat the evils of racial prejudice. But it still left a key sentence which said that 'no country will afford to régimes which practice racial discrimination assistance which directly contributes to the pursuit or consolidation of this evil policy'. Neither we nor the Australians were prepared to accept wording which could lead to the actions of any member being subject to challenge at the interpretation of another. Who was to decide what constituted the kind of assistance which was condemned in this sentence? This was a point of principle which had nothing to do with the subject at issue. It might be arms for South Africa today, with Britain as the target. It would certainly be some other action by some other country tomorrow. To challenge the right of a member country to make its own decisions in its own interests, and to couple with every challenge or disagreement a threat, or even a hint, of withdrawal was totally incompatible with the character of the Commonwealth as an association of free, equal and independent nations. And we certainly did not want any Declaration which took on anything of the character of the United Nations Charter, giving member countries a basis for arraigning others whom they held to be in breach of its provisions.

11. At one point it came very near to being a complete deadlock. The Australian External Affairs Minister took the initiative to break it. Intense discussion with him and the Canadian Prime Minister enabled Mr. Heath to agree to the insertion of 'in its own judgment' into the Guyanese text. This amendment was quickly sold by Mr. Trudeau to the East Africans. This was a further significant shift of position.

12. In this atmosphere, the rest of the Agenda was taken at a brisk trot. The discussion on the implications of our entry into the EEC might have given further opportunity for harsh words about Britain's disregard for the Commonwealth. But Sir Keith Holyoake set the tone with a moderate and helpful speech emphasising that a strong Britain would mean a stronger Commonwealth and this debate was quickly and

quietly over. The disproportionate time spent on the arms issue also meant that Heads of Government dealt only cursorily with the other items on the Agenda which deserved proper consideration, above all the proposals for new schemes of Commonwealth collaboration and the discussion on the comparative techniques of government proposed by Mr. Trudeau. This was, by agreement, postponed to the next Meeting. Even so, in the longer term it may be that the agreement to fund the Commonwealth Foundation for a further period, to set up an expanded Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (with an even wider development fund in prospect) and to launch a Commonwealth Information Programme, may come to be seen as the lasting practical achievements of the Meeting. Other items, such as proposals for a consideration of problems of youth (including our own paper on youth unemployment) were remitted to the following Commonwealth Education Conference in Canberra.

Conference procedures

13. The experience of the arms discussion and its impact on an already crowded agenda did nevertheless produce some useful side-effects. It was brought home to Heads of Government that the lengthy set speech and its release to the Press for home consumption was threatening to kill the special character and value of their Meetings. The intimacy and ease of personal exchanges in the restricted sessions served to emphasise how far procedures during the rest of the Meeting were moving towards the formality of the United Nations. On the first day, speeches were greeted with applause until the Chairman stepped in. The Committees of officials had to endure constant niggling points of drafting detail more appropriate to a United Nations Sub-Committee, above all from the Indians.

14. The geography of the Plenary meeting room probably contributed: a large modern auditorium, clinically cool, with far too much distance between those seated at the huge oval table, with a microphone before each which could only be switched on by the operator of a remote control panel. It was, like all the other arrangements which the Singapore Government made for the Meeting, superbly but a little dauntingly efficient, and totally exclusive of any cut and thrust of debate. It seemed decades away from Marlborough House with its tightly packed and intimate, if at times over-close, atmosphere. But in getting away from Marlborough House's defects, the Singaporeans went to the other extreme of remoteness.

15. A number of Heads of Government voiced their disapproval of these developments and the Secretary-General was instructed to review procedures to preserve the confidentiality and informality which should be the hallmark of these Meetings. Certainly, if they are to continue to be of value, there must be no more of the open propaganda designed to pressurise. It may be that in future we should attempt a shorter and less detailed Agenda with more restricted sessions, in a deliberate attempt to return to informed but informal 'Cabinet' discussion. We may need to look at the way of tackling opening items to preserve the value of the exchanges on world affairs, while avoiding a time-consuming free-for-all. More preparatory committee discussion might also be useful. We shall be looking hard at these and other ways of overhauling procedures over the coming months. Meanwhile we were able to make one useful change at Singapore which I hope will continue. After officials had sat in committee for long and tedious hours arguing over the draft of a full communiqué, Heads of Government decided upon and took on the nod, a short text, reflecting the items discussed but not their content.

Other delegations

16. In the nature of the case this was another Meeting at which African leaders were at the centre of events. The East Africans, with Nigerian help (and ready Indian assistance) were the chief spokesmen on the arms issue. President Nyerere also supplemented his contributions with a booklet, circulated during the Meeting, on 'South Africa and the Commonwealth'. Apart from some emotional intensity during the early hours of Thursday morning, the East Africans were hard-hitting but fair. It remains to be seen what effect Dr. Obote's removal³ will have on their largely uncompromising stand. The other Africans held to the middle ground and were always ready to seek a compromise. The Caribbeans, with little opportunity to concentrate attention on their own problems, found themselves echoing the Africans.

17. African dominance is partly a function of their making up about half the membership of the Commonwealth. Even so, there were signs that the others were getting tired of so much time being absorbed in one continent's problems. With an Asian venue the Asians might have been expected to claim a bigger say. But Mrs. Gandhi and President Yahya Khan⁴ were absent and Mr. Lee's stimulating and authoritative contributions had to be made as Chairman. The Pacific Islanders joined the Cypriots and Maltese in a largely observing role, although Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara⁵ made some noteworthy contributions.

18. Among the old Commonwealth the Australians played an independent role and Mr. Gorton gave effective and conciliatory support when it was needed. Mr. Trudeau made little contribution in debate but kept his contacts with the developing countries in good repair. He played a particularly helpful part in achieving agreement over the Commonwealth Declaration and tried throughout to get the arms issue seen in the broader and longer-term context of how to prevent racial war in southern Africa. The New Zealanders were quieter than usual. Sir Keith Holyoake was perhaps disappointed that his contributions were not always accorded the consideration due to his position as senior Commonwealth Head of Government. The Secretariat was uniformly efficient. One could not but admire Mr. Arnold Smith's refusal to recognise difficulties but his popularity is not as widespread as it should be.

General comment

19. At the beginning of this despatch I recorded my view that despite difficulties we had gained our objectives at Singapore. Among them was our wish to see the Commonwealth association preserved from the risk of disintegration through misconceived withdrawals. At the final session Dr. Busia noted that the Commonwealth had emerged intact and claimed that it had not only been preserved but strengthened. One needs to make allowances for the euphoria of the moment but, almost against the odds, he could be right.

20. I do not over-estimate what was achieved, nor under-estimate the difficulties ahead. The crunch over arms sales has been postponed, not resolved. It could still lead to multiple defections. Even so, this further round of consultations has brought a clearer understanding of our position and of the issues involved. The work of the Study Group will, we hope, drive this home. And, whatever decisions we may reach in the future, I do not believe that after Singapore, future pressures will threaten the Commonwealth quite so dangerously.

³ See 383 and 388.

⁴ Of Pakistan.

⁵ Prime minister of Fiji, see 353, note 3.

21. This is because, despite the intensity of the arms debate, the real issue was more fundamental. The Commonwealth came through intact—but only after a testing and salutary examination, which forced us all back to first principles. This was a conference about the nature of the Commonwealth and its value to its members. The Prime Minister was concerned throughout to emphasise that the genius of the Commonwealth lay in its being a free association of independent States, ready to consult and collaborate in a uniquely intimate relationship but in the end insisting upon an unfettered right to pursue their own policies in their own best interests.

22. One of the most hopeful outcomes of the Meeting for the future health of the Commonwealth lay in the tacit acceptance of this principle. The concessions made to our point of view over the establishment of the Study Group (in full knowledge of the Prime Minister's unambiguous reservations about our freedom of action) and over the wording of the controversial passage in the Declaration showed that, when it came to it and for all that had been said before, the Africans and other member countries set their own interest in the maintenance of the Commonwealth too high to put it all lightly to risk.

23. This showed a further healthy change. In the past the more extreme Commonwealth members have tended to look to Britain to make concessions whenever there have been disagreements and the fabric of the Commonwealth has been threatened. It was noticeable this year how much more widely it was being recognised that all member countries—and not just Britain alone—have a responsibility for the association to match their interest in it.

24. I hope that these views will be strengthened as Heads of Government have time to reflect on the lessons of the Meeting. If this new realisation of the obligations, as well as the benefits, of Commonwealth membership can be matched with a change of procedures and a conscious return to the informality and style of earlier days, we may hope to ride political differences more easily in future. We may also hope to get on, without threat of disruption, with the practical, co-operative activities that are such an important and valuable part of what this unique association has to offer its members.

Annexes to 280

FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ

Commonwealth Heads of Government met in Singapore from 14–22 January. All Commonwealth countries were represented, seven by their Presidents, seventeen by their Prime Ministers, one by the Vice-President, and six by senior Ministers. The Prime Minister of Singapore was in the Chair.

2. This was the first Heads of Government Meeting to be held in Asia. Heads of Government welcomed this and expressed gratitude to the Government of Singapore for the hospitality it had provided.

3. The Meeting expressed a warm greeting to the Prime Ministers of Tonga, Western Samoa and Fiji whose countries had become members of the Commonwealth during 1970, and particularly welcomed their membership as it brought to Commonwealth consultations additional views of the peoples of the south-west Pacific.

Commonwealth declaration

4. Heads of Government approved unanimously and issued a Commonwealth Declaration.

International affairs

5. Heads of Government reviewed the world political situation and trends. Views were exchanged on: East-West relations; Chinese representation in the United Nations; the steps required to end the conflict in Indo-China; the neutralisation of South-East Asia; the conditions necessary for achieving a durable settlement in the Middle East; the violation of the security and sovereignty of the Republic of Guinea by the military and naval forces of Portugal in conjunction with other elements; the need for general and complete disarmament under effective international control, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and the conclusion of collateral measures with particular attention to nuclear disarmament until general and complete disarmament is achieved; the staging of nuclear weapons tests and the dumping of chemical weapons in the peaceful South-West pacific area; and the complementary role of regional organisations and such trans-regional groupings as the Commonwealth.

Southern Africa

6. The Meeting reviewed major developments in southern Africa, including in particular those in South Africa and Namibia (South-West Africa), the Portuguese colonies and Rhodesia, and noted that tensions in that region were likely to increase rather than decrease unless there were fundamental changes in the conditions now prevailing. Earlier discussions on NIBMR were recalled. There was unanimous reaffirmation of the importance of the principle that any proposals for settlement must be acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole.

7. The Meeting had before it the report of the Commonwealth Sanctions Committee which reviewed the working of economic sanctions over the last two years. Heads of Government authorised the Committee to continue to review the situation.

8. Heads of Government discussed fully the question of the sale of arms to South Africa.

9. Heads of Government considered the factors affecting the security of maritime trade routes in the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans, which are of vital importance for a large number of Commonwealth countries. They decided to set up a Study Group, consisting of representatives of Australia, Britain, Canada, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia and Nigeria, with instructions to consider the question further and report to them through the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

10. Certain Heads of Government stipulated the understandings on which they agreed to support the proposal to set up the Study Group.

The security of the Indian Ocean

11. In their discussion of a paper presented by the Prime Minister of Ceylon on the security of the Indian Ocean, Heads of Government agreed on the desirability of ensuring that it remains an area of peace and stability.

Economic affairs

12. Heads of Government held a full and frank discussion on the world economic situation and broadly reviewed recent developments and trends. Among the items

discussed were: liberalisation of trade and access to markets; the special problems relating to exports of developing countries; the generalised preferences system and the problems connected with it; international commodity problems; high freight rates; inflation and its consequences; debt servicing problems of developing countries; targets for the transfer of resources to developing countries; terms and conditions of assistance, including the untying of aid; supplementary financing; the possibility of a link between Special Drawing Rights and development finance; and, the lending policies of international financial institutions.

13. Heads of Government expressed their satisfaction that agreement was reached on the International Development Strategy for the Second Development Decade at the United Nations General Assembly. They reaffirmed their Governments' resolve to take the measures to translate into reality the goals and objectives of the decade. In summarising their discussions, they also reaffirmed their conviction that fulfilment of the economic and social aspirations of the peoples of the developing countries was a matter of vital concern not only to the developing nations but to the world at large.

Possible British entry into the EEC

14. Heads of Government discussed Britain's possible entry into the European Economic Community and the implications of this for other Commonwealth members. Among the matters discussed were the questions of: the effect of the Common Agricultural Policy on the exports of Britain's traditional suppliers; the need for any enlarged Community to be outward looking; standstill arrangements for those countries which desired or may be offered association or other trading arrangements with an enlarged Community; reverse preferences and their impact on international trading arrangements; the potential advantages and disadvantages for the Commonwealth in the event of Britain's accession; and methods of consultation during negotiations. They welcomed the resolve of the British Government to continue to press during the negotiations for measures to safeguard the interests of Commonwealth countries.

Commonwealth co-operation for development

15. Heads of Government welcomed the establishment of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation and noted that the way was now open for it to be made operational.

16. Heads of Government discussed the recommendations embodied in a study on Commonwealth Export Market Development. They decided that these recommendations should be given further consideration at an early meeting of trade and finance officials.

Commonwealth information programme

17. Heads of Government agreed in principle on the proposals submitted to them for a Commonwealth Information Programme.

Commonwealth co-operation on youth questions

18. Heads of Government noted with approval the Secretariat's activities in the youth field and agreed that such activities be expanded. They noted that a number of related matters would be discussed at the forthcoming Commonwealth Education

Conference in Canberra. They decided that a meeting of Ministers concerned with youth matters be convened as early as possible.

Commonwealth book development and gift voucher scheme

19. Heads of Government approved in principle the establishment of a Commonwealth Book Voucher Scheme.

Special Commonwealth programme for assisting the education of Rhodesian Africans

20. Heads of Government took note of the development of the programme and supported its continuation.

Commonwealth Foundation

21. Heads of Government noted the progress of the Commonwealth Foundation and agreed to its proposed expansion.

Comparative techniques of government

22. The Conference agreed that the item on 'Comparative Techniques of Government', which was introduced by the Prime Minister of Canada, should be the subject of further discussion at the next meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government. It was proposed that the Secretary-General should facilitate such discussion by arranging for preliminary study of the subject by appropriate officials.

Report of the Commonwealth secretary-general

23. Heads of Government took note of the Third Report of the Commonwealth Secretary-General.

COMMONWEALTH DECLARATION

The Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary association of independent sovereign States, each responsible for its own policies, consulting and co-operating in the common interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding and world peace.

Members of the Commonwealth come from territories in the six continents and five oceans, include peoples of different races, languages and religions, and display every stage of economic development from poor developing nations to wealthy industrialised nations. They encompass a rich variety of cultures, traditions and institutions. Membership of the Commonwealth is compatible with the freedom of member Governments to be non-aligned or to belong to any other grouping, association or alliance.

Within this diversity all members of the Commonwealth hold certain principles in common. It is by pursuing these principles that the Commonwealth can continue to influence international society for the benefit of mankind.

WE BELIEVE that international peace and order are essential to the security and prosperity of mankind; we therefore support the United Nations and seek to strengthen its influence for peace in the world, and its efforts to remove the causes of tension between nations.

WE BELIEVE in the liberty of the individual, in equal rights for all citizens regardless of race, colour, creed or political belief, and in their inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic political processes in framing the society in which they live. We therefore strive to promote in each of our countries those representative institutions and guarantees for personal freedom under the law that are our common heritage.

WE RECOGNISE racial prejudice as a dangerous sickness threatening the healthy development of the human race and racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil of society. Each of us will vigorously combat this evil within our own nation. No country will afford to régimes which practise racial discrimination assistance which in its own judgment directly contributes to the pursuit or consolidation of this evil policy. We oppose all forms of colonial domination and racial oppression and are committed to the principles of human dignity and equality. We will therefore use all our efforts to foster human equality and dignity everywhere and to further the principles of self-determination and non-racialism.

WE BELIEVE that the wide disparities in wealth now existing between different sections of mankind are too great to be tolerated; they also create world tensions; our aim is their progressive removal; we therefore seek to use our efforts to overcome poverty, ignorance and disease, in raising standards of life and achieving a more equitable international society. To this end our aim is to achieve the freest possible flow of international trade on terms fair and equitable to all, taking into account the special requirements of the developing countries, and to encourage the flow of adequate resources, including governmental and private resources, to the developing countries, bearing in mind the importance of doing this in a true spirit of partnership and of establishing for this purpose in the developing countries conditions which are conducive to sustained investment and growth.

WE BELIEVE that international co-operation is essential to remove the causes of war, promote tolerance, combat injustice and secure development amongst the peoples of the world; we are convinced that the Commonwealth is one of the most fruitful associations for these purposes.

In pursuing these principles the members of the Commonwealth believe that they can provide a constructive example of the multi-national approach which is vital to peace and progress in the modern world. The association is based on consultation, discussion and co-operation. In rejecting coercion as an instrument of policy they recognise that the security of each member State from external aggression is a matter of concern to all members. It provides many channels for continuing exchanges of knowledge and views on professional, cultural, economic, legal and political issues among member States. These relationships we intend to foster and extend for we believe that our multi-national association can expand human understanding and understanding among nations, assist in the elimination of discrimination based on differences of race, colour or creed, maintain and strengthen personal liberty, contribute to the enrichment of life for all, and provide a powerful influence for peace among nations.

281 FCO 63/618, no 34

5 Mar 1971

[Commonwealth concerns in the Caribbean]: letter from E N Larmour¹ (Kingston) to Sir D Greenhill in response to criticism of the Caribbean delegations at the Singapore conference

1. Thank you for your letter HCM 1/7 of 22 February about the performance of the Caribbean delegations at the Singapore Conference. I am sorry that you found them all disappointing, including Mr. Shearer. Certainly he and his delegation would be surprised to hear this since they came back feeling that they had made a helpful contribution on the arms for South Africa issue, firstly by suggesting the private meeting and secondly by discussing the issue with more moderation than some. All this (which we have already reported to the Department) does not seem to differ too radically from the assessment of Mr. Shearer's role in your own fourth paragraph.

2. Since the announcement about the decision to licence the export of the Wasps, Mr. Shearer has remained silent for a variety of reasons, discussed in my telegram No. 50 dated 25 February. But his main motive is the over-riding need, as he sees it, to do nothing and to say as little as he can get away with, which might damage Jamaica's image and forfeit British goodwill in the context of the EEC negotiations. So I was rather surprised to hear that reports from secret sources (which have not so far reached me) should describe him as ready to consider retaliatory action. He has several times said to me (and I believe it) that he does not personally feel very strongly on the arms issue and I would expect him to continue to play the issue as coolly as he can and to move only when prodded by domestic or Afro-Asian pressures which he cannot, for his own political reasons, too obviously resist. It seems to me, sitting here in Kingston, that he has handled this very difficult issue as reasonably as could be expected from any black Prime Minister of what is, after all, a country in which the bulk of the population is of African origin, with some, though only a few, of the politically active working to develop closer links with Africa. I imagine that domestic political considerations were also not without their influence in our own Government's decision to go ahead.

3. As I read your letter, it does seem that the main burden of your complaint against Shearer was his speech on economic affairs. I have read it again, and though it is long and must have been tedious to listen to, the text does not suggest to me a bitter attack on Britain, and Shearer regards it, I think rightly, as a much more important topic for Jamaica than the dispute about arms for South Africa. But it is a fact, that our criteria about national income per head rule out Jamaica from receiving capital aid from us and Jamaicans feel that there should be some kind of half-way house in giving soft-term loans to countries like Jamaica. They are very appreciative of the protection we give them for their sugar and their bananas and some of their other tropical products, and they know that they get good value out of the £300,000 worth of technical assistance that we allocate to them each year. But they are short of capital. They cannot afford to go on the London Market, and the recent increase in the rate of interest has made ECGD finance much less attractive than hitherto. What they would really like from Britain is a soft loan, such as the Canadians recently made available to them of \$C 27.6 million at 3% repayable over

¹ High commissioner, Jamaica, and non-resident ambassador, Haiti, 1970–1973 (see 157).

30 years. I think too that countries depending mainly on agriculture, as does Jamaica, are quite entitled in the Commonwealth forum to draw attention to the worsening terms of trade between them and the industrial countries. One continually hears in conversations here the point made by Shearer in Singapore, that whereas twenty years ago three tons of bananas could buy a Hillman Minx, it now takes eleven tons. Jamaicans point out that despite ever rising costs of production, the price of bananas to the British housewife has been steady at about 1/6d per lb. since the late 1940's, contrasted with the very substantial rise in British export prices over the same period. This is of course a general world problem. Advanced countries and some not so advanced countries too, have found it necessary to protect their domestic agriculture by supporting prices, or levies, or subsidies of one kind and another. It may be that the time is coming when the international community will have seriously to consider whether some kind of international initiative will have to be taken to give a fairer deal to agricultural products from developing countries. Shearer paid a tribute to Mr. Heath and to Britain for their part in the discussions in UNCTAD which led to the Generalised Preference Scheme. I think his present objective is to focus Commonwealth, and especially British, attention on the terms of trade in the hope that this may eventually result in some kind of international action to solve the problem, or at least to mitigate its consequences.

Index of Main Subjects and Persons

This is not a comprehensive index, but a simplified and straightforward *index to document numbers*, together with page references to the Introduction in part I, the latter being given at the beginning of the entry in lower-case roman numerals. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the summary lists and chapter headings of the preliminary pages of each volume-part. It provides a quick finding aid to the leading British policy-advisers and decision-makers, and the main subjects. As far as persons are concerned, entries are subdivided by subject, in the Labour government, for Wilson, Bottomley, Bowden, Brown, Callaghan, Gordon Walker, Greenwood, Healey, Jenkins, Stewart, and Thomson, and for Heath and Douglas-Home in the Conservative government. For subjects, every country of the world in 1968, with the exception of UK dependent territories, is listed in the enclosure to document 157, a study by the FCO of priorities by country for British interests. These references are not indexed. Where necessary, as for instance in particularly long documents, and if possible, paragraph numbers are given inside round brackets. The following abbreviations and symbols are used:

- A — appendix or annex
- E — enclosure
- N — editor's link note (before main text of document)
- n — footnote
- † — entry in office-holders, at the beginning of each volume-part
- * — entry in biographical notes, at the end of part III

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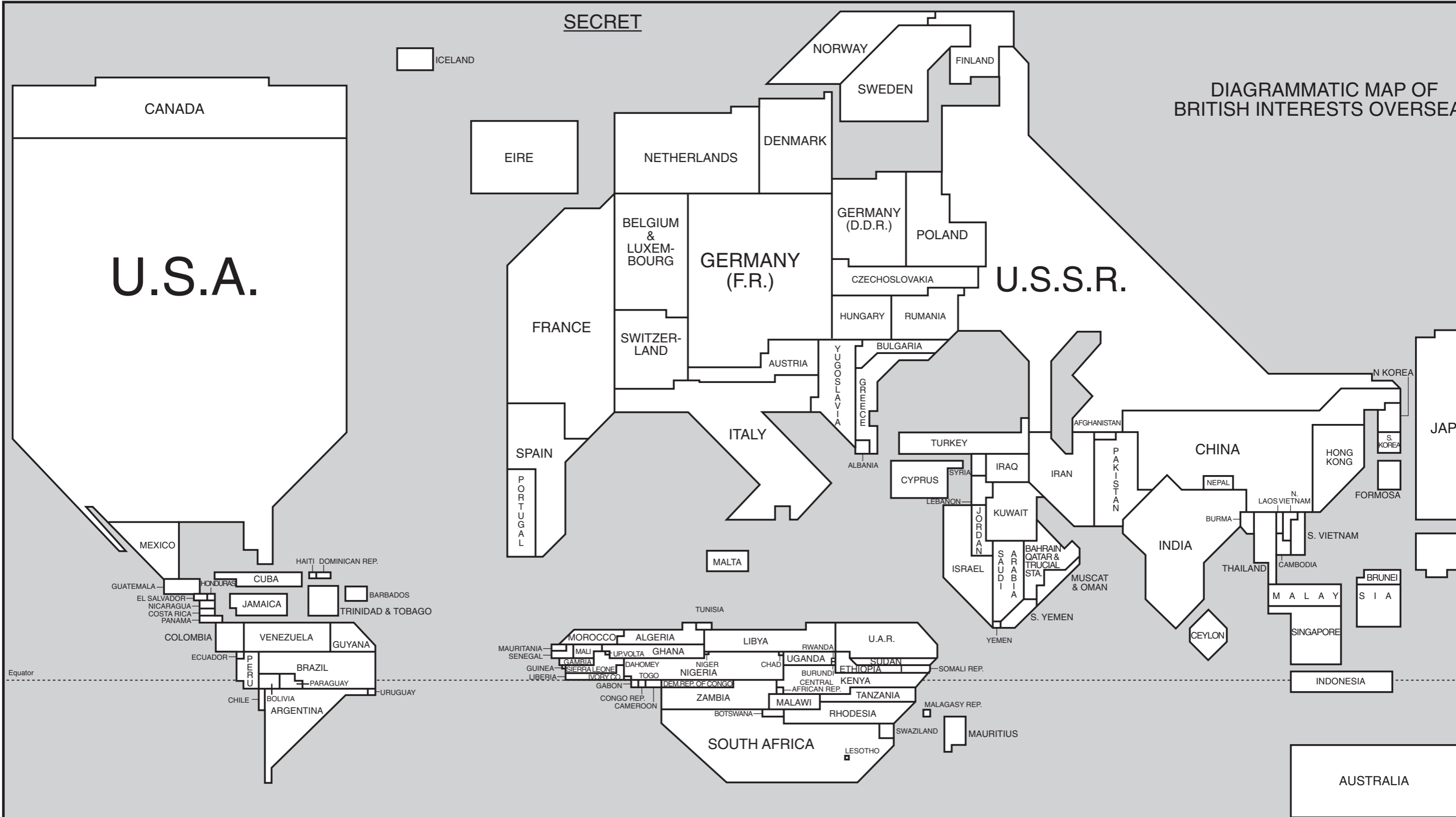
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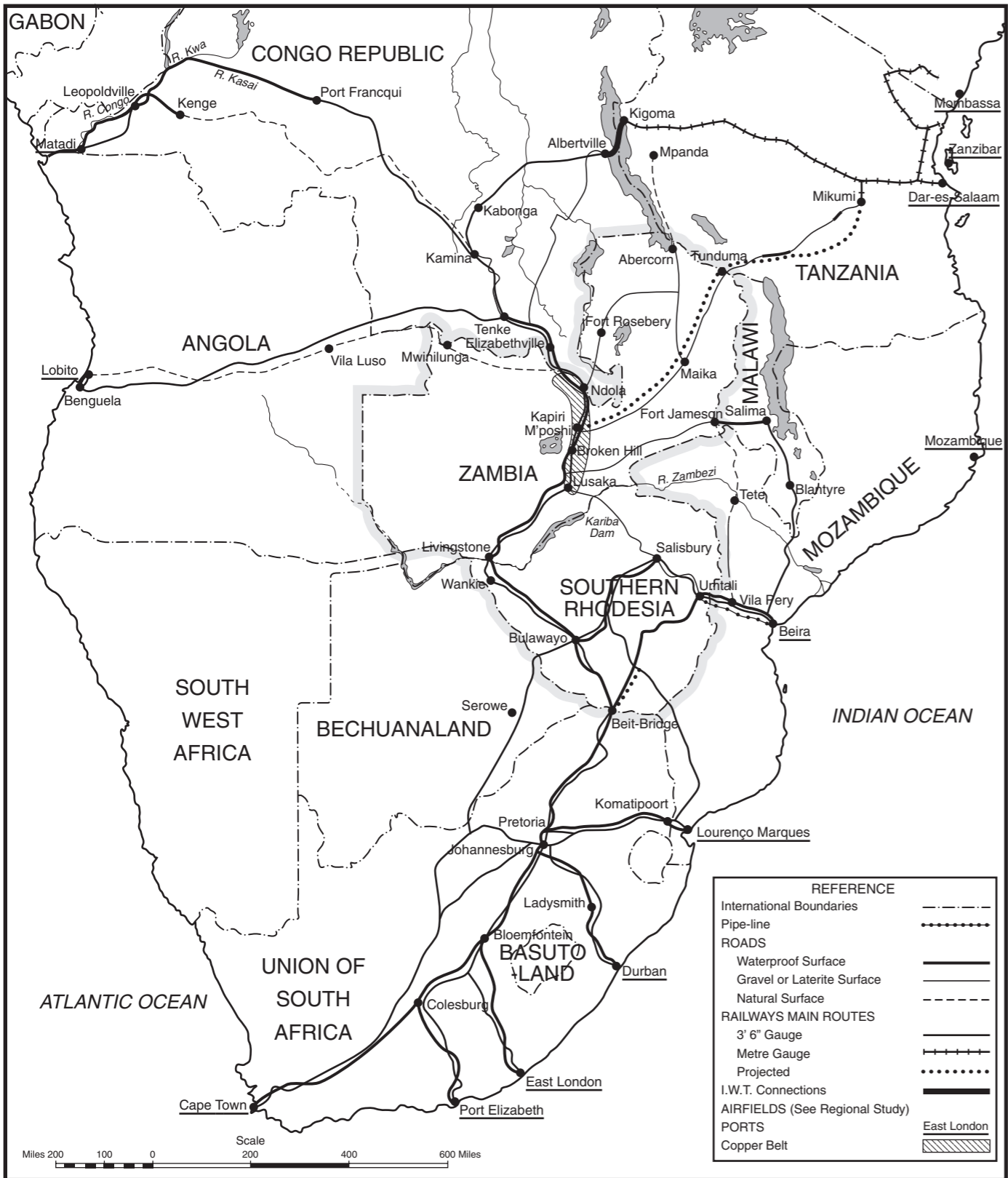
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SECRET

DIAGRAMMATIC MAP OF
BRITISH INTERESTS OVERSEAS





RHODESIA & ZAMBIA: MAIN ROUTES TO THE COAST WITH ASSOCIATE PORTS AND PIPELINES