

RHODESIAN RAID AGAINST TERRORIST CAMPS IN ZAMBIA

DIGEST OF INFORMATION

The relevant part of ... a telegram dated 20 October 1978 from Lusaka to FCO London

The Rhodesian bombing raid has created a grave situation here and our efforts have been further hampered by the demonstration which made it necessary to evacuate the office temporarily as a precaution.

The relevant part of ... a telegram dated 20 October 1978 from Salisbury to London

The Herald leads with the story of the Rhodesian air attack on a ZIPRA base 20kms north of Lusaka. It says that the camp was one of the largest housing about 2,000 terrorists. At least 300 guerillas are reported to have died but sources are quoted as saying that the death toll could be much higher. Sources in Lusaka have reported that Rhodesian planes also bombed a second camp near Mumbwa, 140kms west of Lusaka. Combined Operations Headquarters have stated that prior to the launching the attack they asked the Zambian authorities to clear all civilian aircraft from the area and this request was complied with. A spokesman for Combined Operations HQ has dismissed as "rubbish" allegations by Mr Nkomo that the camp was full of refugees. He also denied a Zambian report that 2 helicopters had been shot down.

Mr Ian Smith, commenting on the attack on the ZIPRA base, said in Washington yesterday that he and his 3 colleagues on the Executive Council were not specifically told of the raid before it started. He said that the leaders of the security forces were responsible for deciding whose action was necessary to take against terrorist bases. Bishop Muzorewa is quoted as saying, "I think the army was doing its duty in defending the people".

A Herald editorial says that "those using the camp outside Lusaka got what they deserved" but "one awaits the inevitable censure from those to whom terrorism is all wrong unless it is practised against Rhodesians". It ends "while Rhodesia has every right to show its muscle, it must be everybody's earnest hope that incidents such as this do not ignite a far bigger keg".

The relevant part of ... a telegram dated 29 October 1978 from FCO London to Copenhagen

Danish Foreign Minister told Secretary of State that Muzorewa had said on television in Denmark that he had not known about the raid into Zambia in advance and condemned it.

The relevant part of ... a minute (*FCO internal memo*) dated 24 October 1978 from an official at the High Commission in Salisbury to select colleagues at the High Commission

On the raid into Zambia, Mr Smith claimed that he had no knowledge about it in advance, and that according to the general directive given by the government to the

security forces, they could take this sort of action on their own initiative. He said he was happy at the result of the raid.

The relevant part of ... a telegram dated 9 November 1978 from Embassy Lusaka to FCO London

The ZNDF are discontented and demoralised as a result of their inability to take effective action in the face of the Rhodesian raids which is bringing them into popular contempt.

The relevant part of ... a telegram dated 23 October 1978 from Embassy Lusaka to FCO London

At a press conference on 23 October President Kaunda condemned the aggression against Zambia by the racists in Rhodesia and South Africa and in particular attacks against civilian refugee camps and the ZAPU women's camp. He pointed to the fact that the order for the attacks had been given by Mr Smith while in the USA and described the current visit as a grave tactical error by the US Government. He was amazed at the lukewarm condemnation of the raids by the US and British Governments. Their response that raids underlined once again the need for all party conference was to him incomprehensible and perhaps provide implicit encouragement to Smith.

President called on Zambian leaders present to explain the true facts of the situation to the people and so counter the enemy propaganda. The Zambian government had been forewarned of the attacks by an incident the previous week when villagers had reported an airdrop of mines and explosives. These had been recovered by Zambian police and 18 non-Zambians had been arrested in suspicion of being involved in sabotage. President described this incident as an effort by Rhodesians to drive a wedge between Zambia and Patriotic Front by carrying out acts of sabotage against Southern Railway route for which Freedom Fighters would be blamed. Zambian government had received advance warning of raids from secret sources on morning of 18 October. They and Patriotic Front had expected raids to be against military targets and appropriate precautions had been taken. They had not expected refugee camps to be attacked. Kaunda explained that Zambian defence forces could not compete with the sophisticated weapons supplied to Rhodesia by Western vested interests. Because of emphasis that had been placed by Zambia on economic development, defence forces had been kept short of funds and were not therefore in a position to prevent air strikes of the kind that had taken place. He emphasised the impossibility of defending a country as large as Zambia with such extended borders. Kaunda said emphatically that he would not order retaliatory bombing attacks against Rhodesia, although this was within Zambia Air Force capability, as this would escalate the war. He was a realist and would not permit Zambia to commit suicide. His first task was to defend Zambia by political means, and this he was doing. He urged Zimbabweans to maintain their confidence in Zambia's continuing support.

Answering press questions, President refused permission for journalists to visit camps which had been attacked, and would not be drawn on evidence of reports that Rhodesian aircraft had been shot down. Asked by Zambian reporter how Smith could be brought down, Kaunda simply said that they must brace themselves for a long

struggle. On possibility of seeking defence assistance abroad, he said simply that he was considering various options. He absolved President Carter of complicity in decision to attack Zambia, but repeated that order had been given from American soil. President concluded conference by thanking all those who had come forward to donate blood, and by appealing to Zambia's friends for drugs and medical equipment which were in very short supply.