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*“We Don’t Give a Damn about Rhodesia”**The Geneva Talks, 1976*

The Geneva talks on Rhodesia were a fairly elaborate undertaking pushed by the Americans and rather reluctantly hosted by the British.¹ The timing of the conference during the US presidential elections would mean that Kissinger and his team were not in a position to really push beyond what Kissinger managed to establish in his pre-conference shuttle diplomacy. From Kissinger’s perspective, he had achieved his goal when Ian Smith made his September 24, 1976 speech on national television in Rhodesia, stating that he agreed with the Americans to accept majority rule in two years’ time in exchange for a number of safeguards for white Rhodesians. For Kissinger, getting Smith and the Frontline State presidents to agree on the parameters of a conference was the key goal. As he told many of the parties in bilateral talks, the goal was to show the world that the United States was no longer supporting a white settler state in the context of the new Cold War race state logic created by events in Angola and Mozambique. As the Kissinger quote in this chapter title suggests, Kissinger was not interested in keeping up the pretense that he was even interested in the political outcome in Rhodesia. What was paramount to him was the need to avoid confronting the Soviet Union’s arms and Cuban troops in Rhodesia.

As described in Chapter 3, Kissinger managed to obtain South African assistance to help sell the Anglo-American plans to Smith. This chapter examines how Kissinger’s efforts were interpreted by the Frontline State presidents, the Patriotic Front (PF) leaders, the British, and the Rhodesians. The problems caused by Kissinger having offered Smith more than the Frontline State presidents and Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe could accept quickly became evident at the Geneva

¹ The quote in the chapter title is from Henry Kissinger, taken from the Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, DC, December 21, 1976, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976*, Volume xxviii, Southern Africa, 235.

conference. In a certain sense, the impasse caused by Smith's insistence that Kissinger had offered him the five points as guarantees rather than a starting point helped to sink the Geneva talks. Even further, Kissinger had hoped that by offering Smith the insurance packages for whites contained in Annex C, Smith himself would have made these a bigger deal at Geneva. Kissinger had hoped that if Smith and the British managed to get the language of Annex C tabled during the talks, it would help move the negotiations in ways that would guarantee protections of land and pensions to whites, making them more accepting of a transition to majority rule. Kissinger, who did not attend the Geneva talks, was later disappointed that Annex C was not tabled by Smith.

The British, however, were more than happy to not have Annex C brought into the negotiations at Geneva. They had been incensed when they found out Kissinger had presented Annex C to the South Africans and Rhodesians as an Anglo-American position. They told Kissinger that since the document had not received Cabinet approval, they were not able to support it. The main reason for their objection was that Annex C went too far, in their opinion, in terms of Britain's responsibility for the transitional government. What will be shown in this chapter is that the Callaghan government was trying its best to avoid any commitment to a traditional decolonization role in Rhodesia. Kissinger and Nyerere, for their part, wanted the British to accept that role in terms of hosting a Lancaster House constitutional conference and appointing a British governor with powers to oversee the transition and election. This was the main tension between Nyerere and the British, and Kissinger and the British.

While all of these bilateral disagreements added to the failure of the Geneva talks, this chapter will also look at the major swing in the Zimbabwean nationalist leadership momentum caused by the Geneva talks. As the last chapter showed, Kissinger and others were depending on Nyerere and Kaunda to present a unified Zimbabwean leadership at the Geneva conference. This was again thought to be a safeguard against the problems with split loyalties in the Angolan conflict. The British and Kaunda were more than willing to push for Nkomo as the leader of this new united front. However, Nyerere and Machel were not convinced that Nkomo's Soviet-supported military wing was capable of taking the leading role in the fighting, given Nyerere's and Machel's support for the Chinese-backed ZANLA military. The problem was the uncertain relationship between the military and political

leadership in ZANLA and ZANU. The destructiveness of the Nhari rebellion, especially the killing of many accused plotters, and Chitepo's assassination, meant that there was no clear ZANU leader in early 1976.

Into this leadership void entered Robert Mugabe, who had done what he could to show that he was distant from Ndabaningi Sithole and Abel Muzorewa, the two leaders who had tried to work within the Lusaka Accords' new umbrella African National Council. The ZANU leadership problem was further complicated by Nyerere's and Machel's attempt to reduce the internal violence and schisms in ZANLA by forming the "Third Force," the ZIPA, led by younger military leaders such as Wilfred Mhanda (whose war name was Dzino Machingura) and others. The problem for Nyerere was that while he was impressed with the military achievements of ZIPA, he was not so confident about the ability of this younger generation in ZIPA to represent themselves diplomatically at Geneva. Nyerere was interested in finding a way to check Nkomo's ability to negotiate directly with Smith and the British. The failures of the *détente* negotiations in 1974–75 had left Nyerere with the impression that Nkomo would break with the others and negotiate a direct path to majority rule with Smith. He also knew that Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia was pushing this scenario on the British and Americans, and so he needed a strong partner in the PF. This chapter will therefore explore how Mugabe took full advantage of the opportunities the Geneva talks presented him.

Before looking at Geneva, it is worth considering an interesting encounter between Kissinger and China's foreign minister, Chiao Kuan-hua [Qiao Guanhua], on October 8, 1976, at the office of the People's Republic of China's mission to the United Nations. The two discussed a number of topics, including US policy toward Angola and Rhodesia. Chiao stated his reservations about the future success of US policy in Rhodesia: "We have our doubts that you will reach your objective." Kissinger responded by stating that the United States had "two objectives in Africa. One is the liberation of black Africa. The other is to prevent Soviet intervention of a direct or indirect kind." Chiao replied, "Just not opposing liberation movements is not enough," to which Kissinger responded, "We are supporting them." "I have doubts that you are. You are not thoroughgoing, speaking quite frankly," Chiao countered. Kissinger asked what would constitute a more "thoroughgoing" strategy, and Chiao replied, "You should

support the demands of the blacks.” Kissinger pressed back, saying the United States was supporting their demands, but Chiao demurred, saying “the procedures you are adopting in Zimbabwe won’t achieve their aim.”

Kissinger then summarized US policy toward Rhodesia, which he described as a response to two different scenarios. “One is straight armed struggle which would bring in outside forces and add to the credit of those outside forces. If this were to occur, we could not resist those outside forces because we could not go to the support of white regimes against blacks.” The alternative, which Kissinger said the United States was trying to achieve, was to “bring together the black forces of Mugabe, Muzorewa, and Nkomo in one black government that we can support to resist the intervention of outside forces. I consider Smith’s position only the opening move.”² Chiao again replied, “You can try, but we have our doubts.” China’s ambassador to the UN, Huang Hun, suggested Kissinger look carefully at the attitudes of the five Frontline States. “If you do not (satisfy them), they will be forced to accept Soviet assistance.” Kissinger said the United States was doing this and believed the United States had the support of four of the five Frontline State presidents, with Angola being the only one that could not be counted on. Chiao again warned Kissinger that US efforts were “only half measures,” and although the United States would “keep on trying . . . you may find that the result is the opposite of what you expect. You may end up angering the blacks.” Chiao and Kissinger went back and forth over the relative potential an interim government strategy might have for producing favorable results to keep the Soviets and Cubans out of Rhodesia. Kissinger reiterated that he was “hopeful that Mugabe, Muzorewa, and Nkomo are going to join forces.” Chiao replied “We will have to see. We have our reservations.” Kissinger responded “I see you have no better strategy,” to which Chiao replied, “It is your problem.” Kissinger went on to remind Chiao, “It is more than our problem. I remember in November 1973 when Premier Chou spoke to me regarding the need for global equilibrium to prevent Soviet expansion.”³

What is interesting about this exchange, apart from Chiao’s pessimistic view of US strategy in the region, is the extent to which Mugabe’s name

² Memorandum of Conversation, Chiao Kuan-hua and Secretary Kissinger, October 8, 1976, PRC Mission to the United Nations, Document 00429, DNSA.

³ Ibid.

had now entered Kissinger's vocabulary when discussing Rhodesia, even with the Chinese. In part, this may have been because of Chinese support for ZANLA, which could have led to Kissinger emphasizing Mugabe's importance. Chiao's diplomatic warning to Kissinger over his new southern African policy did express something Kissinger and the Anglo-Americans were not completely in touch with – that is, given Chinese support of ZANLA and Soviet support for ZIPRA, there was still not sufficient pressure on either Nkomo and Mugabe to negotiate seriously with the British and Rhodesians in 1976. Importantly, there were not sufficient ways to force the two militaries to cooperate given their outside sources of weapons. Nyerere and the other Frontline State presidents would try to squeeze the two in this way using the OAU Liberation Committee, but it was never enough to force unity.

Planning for Geneva

Once the invitations to attend the Geneva conference had been extended to Nkomo, Muzorewa, and Mugabe, questions arose regarding who else should attend, how many people the British would pay expenses for in each delegation, and the how long it would take to prepare and arrive for the conference. One issue – Mugabe's claim that he would not attend the Geneva conference if Sithole was invited – was resolved quickly. British diplomat Mervyn Brown talked with Nyerere on October 16 where he obtained Nyerere's assurance that Mugabe would attend and added that he still thought they should invite Sithole. Dennis Grennan, who was also in the meeting, asked Nyerere if "Mugabe's worry was that he would be disowned by ZIPA." Nyerere's response revealed the continued uncertainties over who was really representing ZIPA at the time: "Nyerere agreed that Mugabe did not control ZIPA, although he pretended that he did, and therefore we should not over-estimate him." Grennan reported that Nyerere "went on to imply that it would not matter greatly if ZIPA were not represented at Geneva. The Five Presidents would back a solution, not individual leaders. Africa would judge the conference by its results, and [if] these were satisfactory, i.e. achieving a genuine transfer of power, then ZIPA would be powerless to oppose it."⁴

⁴ Brown from Dar es Salaam to FCO (telno 432), October 16, 1976, "YR Tel no 289: Rhodesia Conference," item 230, FCO36/1845, BNA.

Nyerere's comment revealed his frustrations with the Zimbabwean leadership over many years. He certainly knew enough of their history to remain apprehensive about their ability to deliver a united front at Geneva.

An important issue to resolve before the Geneva talks began was the status of those ZANU leaders arrested in Zambia over the assassination of Chitepo. Information from Botswana suggested that "the question of [the] release of detainees was a very serious one for Mugabe. According to Botswana Government's information ZIPA, who controlled him, would not let Mugabe attend [the] conference if certain of detainees were not released."⁵ The leader who did the most to help free the ZANU leaders was apparently Nkomo, since Mugabe had little contact with the Zambians at this time and was, in any case, on bad terms with President Kaunda after criticizing his handling of the Chitepo murder investigation. Nkomo met with American Ambassador Stephen Low in Lusaka on October 14, 1976, where he gave the Americans and British the impression he was in control of the situation. Reportedly, Nkomo was optimistic that he and Mugabe would work as a team at Geneva, and that "he and Mugabe had decided to make two or three places available to Muzorewa within their delegations." Nkomo thought Bishop Muzorewa would accept, or face "essentially being frozen out of the meaningful conversation."

Nkomo spoke confidently of handling the issue of the ZANU prisoners still held in Zambia, telling Ambassador Low that he personally would "'take care' of the problem of the imprisoned Karanga," adding that "it would not be possible to get those released who had been formally charged (i.e. Tongogara), but four others whom Mugabe considered important would be made available." Nkomo planned to speak with the prisoners personally, "and he had informed Mugabe of this." Low was impressed by Nkomo's intervention on behalf of Mugabe's delegation and commented, "If Nkomo can indeed 'take care of' the Karanga problem, he will have established a basis for leadership of the nationalist movement beyond his own ZAPU organization."⁶ That was likely Nkomo's desired impression, to

⁵ Emery from Gaborone to FCO (telno 767), October 16, 1976, "Rhodesia Conference," item 241, FCO36/1845, BNA.

⁶ Lusaka to Secretary of State, "Meeting with Nkomo," 1976Lusaka02781, October 15, 1976, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

show he was in control, but as the Geneva conference unfolded, this initial act of leadership within the PF would eventually help Mugabe's prestige more than that of Nkomo.

Nyerere and Callaghan Debate the Race State Goals of Geneva

Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere wrote to James Callaghan, the British prime minister, on 31 October, explaining his concerns for the Geneva conference. The first point Nyerere made was to reiterate previous protests he and the Frontline State presidents had lodged with Prime Minister Callaghan about the Britain's selection of their UN ambassador, Ivor Richard, as chair of the Geneva conference. Nyerere stressed that they were not complaining about Richard personally, but that when Ian Smith first offered to host a conference in Rhodesia with himself as chairman, the Frontline State presidents had protested and refused, and then Britain had offered to host the conference. Nyerere explained: "The African states have all the time been emphasizing Britain's responsibility for decolonisation. Our desire that a British Minister should take the chair at the conference was a reflection of the same attitude: we wanted a Minister as a symbol of Britain's full commitment to getting the Rhodesian question finally solved."⁷

Nyerere's main point, however, was to emphasize that the Frontline State presidents "cannot support a white minority government which happens to have black faces in it." He wanted to make sure he and Callaghan were in "full agreement" over this point. Nyerere argued, "After the experiences of the last fifteen years or so, I am afraid race cannot be regarded as irrelevant: I wish it could. Unfortunately, we now have to go further and say that power in the transition has to be in the hands of an African-dominated government." Nyerere asked rhetorically if he and Callaghan agreed on this point.⁸ Nyerere then closed his letter by challenging Callaghan's own statement that there is "no practical prospect of Britain assuming its colonial responsibility." Nyerere stated in his usual blunt style: "Jim, you have the responsibility, you can't run away from it. Rhodesia is not an independent

⁷ Brown Dar es Salaam to FCO (telno 449), November 1, 1976, "Rhodesia Conference" ("Text of Further Letter to Prime Minister from President Nyerere, Delivered to Me [Brown] This Evening (31 Oct)"), item 437, FCO36/1848, BNA.

⁸ Ibid.

country – Britain has herself been saying this in the United Nations and elsewhere ever since 1965.” Nyerere’s letter was received as the conference had begun, and his concerns about Britain’s lack of commitment to taking the lead as the transitional power in Rhodesia would prove warranted.

Callaghan responded to Nyerere’s letter on November 9, 1976. In his response, he continued his avoidance of committing his government to taking on the key role in the decolonization of Rhodesia. In doing so, he resorted to a common theme of British diplomacy in Rhodesia: racial fears of what a future African “race state” might hold. Callaghan identified the mutual goal of Britain and Tanzania, writing “it is common ground between us that members of the racist minority cannot be allowed, during the interim period, to frustrate the transition to independence under majority rule.” However, Callaghan pushed back on the issue of race in terms of a lack of protection for those whites who would stay on. “It would be tragic if the African nationalists let him [Smith] off the hook by insisting on conditions which the sensible Europeans would regard as unacceptable and unworkable.” He argued, “This would not prevent Zimbabwe eventually reaching majority rule, but it would be by the path of blood and economic destruction, rather than by the peaceful means that you and I wish to see.” He also said, “I however, do not want to see, and I hope you would not either, a repetition of the mass exodus of the whites which occurred in Mozambique.” Callaghan also skirted the issue of direct British involvement, saying that although there were a number of ways Britain could help, he was “deliberately confining [himself] to a broad statement of principle rather than enter into details.” Callaghan concludes that such a strategy would help the Geneva talks proceed.⁹ Nyerere wrote to Callaghan again on November 10, reiterating his main concern for the conference: “If there is no such transfer of effective power from the minority, we cannot be expected to support the new Government for it would still be a minority government with Black

⁹ Fm Crosland FCO to Dar es Salaam, “Text of letter from the Prime Minister to President Nyerere,” November 9, 1976, item 465, FCO36/1848, BNA. See also: Miles from Lusaka to FCO (telno 2678), November 9, 1976, “Rhodesia Conference,” item 467, FCO36/1848, BNA; Brown from Dar es Salaam to FCO (telno 464), November 10, 1976 “Your Tel no 303: Rhodesia Conference,” item 468, FCO36/1848, BNA.

African faces. Such a Government would not have the power to end the war, which would then continue with full O.A.U. support.”¹⁰

Once the conference began, Mugabe and Nkomo worked as a team in the negotiations, while Bishop Muzorewa and Reverend Sithole were left on their own. The first major complaint from the PF was that Ivor Richard, as UN Ambassador for Britain, was not of ministerial status, and therefore did not have the legal authority to negotiate the decolonization process for Britain. This protest held up opening day ceremonies even further, and British foreign secretary Anthony Crosland was forced to send a message directly to the PF assuring them that Richard had authority to lead the conference. He was careful, however, to stop short of saying that Richard had authority to grant independence. Crosland’s letter to Nkomo and Mugabe assured them that Richard was vested with authority by the Cabinet to “represent” the British government at the conference and to “speak for” that government. “The British government is the government which has constitutional responsibility for Rhodesia. In the name of the British Government I can tell you that we embark on this conference with the clear intention that it should be the beginning of the decolonization process.”¹¹ Separately, Crosland also gave Richard specific instructions the day before the opening of the conference to avoid any commitment on the Britain’s part to invest their authority in the process. “You should also take every opportunity, both in public and private, to re-iterate that Rhodesia is not a normal colony and the ‘colonial power’ does not have ‘colonial responsibilities’ in the traditional sense.” Crosland instructed Richard to include this point in his opening statement.¹²

The debate over the independence date was the only substantive topic actually debated at Geneva, as talks between the principals broke down on this issue and precipitated Smith’s departure from the talks. Given that Smith insisted on working from the five points he had agreed upon with Kissinger in September, the inability of Ambassador

¹⁰ President Nyerere to Prime Minister Callaghan, October 14, 1976, attached to item 374, FCO36/1847, BNA.

¹¹ Bottomley from UKMIS Geneva to FCO (telno 368), October 28, 1976, “Following from Richard My Telno 366,” item 44, FCO36/1802, BNA.

¹² Crosland to Richard (UKMIS Geneva) (telno 231) October 27, 1976 “Your Telnos 343 and (Not to all) 347: Rhodesia Conference,” item 20, FCO36/1802, BNA.

Richard to support the five points as the basis of the Geneva talks allowed Smith an “out” from the conference. Smith left the conference and returned to Salisbury on November 4, 1976, two days after President Ford was defeated by Jimmy Carter in the US presidential election. As far as Smith was concerned, Kissinger’s ability to guarantee the promises he had made in Pretoria were no longer viable.¹³

A good example of how the debate went at Geneva comes from a discussion among the heads of delegations on November 2. Richard called the meeting to have a “round-table discussion” about fixing the date of independence. The first of the “five points” that Smith insisted as the basis of negotiations stated that “Rhodesia agrees to majority rule within two years.” Nkomo was the first to speak, making the point that “all the delegates at the conference agreed that their purpose was to work out ways to transfer power. Zimbabwe’s independence had already been unduly delayed.” He stressed that the PF “felt strongly that it was desirable to fix the date before going any further in discussion; and all Zimbabweans were waiting for a date to be fixed.” Mugabe agreed with Nkomo, adding that “before discussing any proposals for the transfer of power it was necessary to have a date so they could be put into perspective and a programme drawn up.”

Ian Smith’s first comment demonstrated his frustrations, as he “pointed out that little progress had been made in the last two weeks.” Sithole then gave a history lesson on the question of majority rule in Rhodesia, saying that “it was first raised in 1890.” Ian Smith then interjected that the first of the five points had already fixed a date. “Independence should come two years hence.” Sithole quickly corrected this, saying, “If he read the five points correctly independence should come within two years.” Mugabe then questioned the authority of Smith’s claim about the five points being an accepted document by all parties at the conference. Smith, speaking to Richard rather than Mugabe, asked “whether the Chairman had not communicated the five points to the leaders of the delegations.” Richard claimed that he had,

¹³ Smith would later tell political scientist Stephen Stedman, in a 1987 interview, that Kissinger had inferred to Smith “that if there was a new [US] government in November, Rhodesia’s position would worsen.” Stedman goes on to say that Ken Flower, an important Rhodesian intelligence officer, also interviewed by Stedman in 1987, “maintains that Kissinger’s words were stronger: ‘if the Republicans are not returned to office in November, the deal is off.’” Stephen J. Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War: International Mediation in Zimbabwe, 1974–1980* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990), 98.

but Nkomo then “pointed out that the leaders had not come to the conference to discuss the five points.” Muzorewa also said he did not take the five points as a “formal document but more like a note of conversation.” Nkomo agreed and then suggested that “one year was surely ‘within two years.’” Nkomo, Mugabe, and Muzorewa are all recorded as saying that “the period should be 12 months.”¹⁴

At this point, Smith executed a pivot, a technique for which he was well known. He used the nationalists’ refusal to accept the five points as the basis for the negotiations as his chance to evade and excused himself from the process. Historian Jamie Miller sums up Smith’s trademark negotiating technique well: “redefining others’ statements as categorical assurances and then tenaciously using these to allege betrayal on the other party’s part regardless of context or subsequent events.”¹⁵ As the British and Frontline State presidents had warned Kissinger earlier in the year, Smith was “hard to pin down,” and a day before the US election results were known, he was establishing the springboard for his exit. Smith responded to criticisms that the five points, and specifically point one on the timing of independence, “was taken from what he understood to be an Anglo/American agreement which had been put to him by Dr. Kissinger at their meeting.” He went on to say that he would “in fact like to alter it.”: “Two years was too short. But he was abiding by the contract that he had made. However, if there were to be a change from the agreed position of the two years, this would free him from his contract.”¹⁶ Immediately, Nkomo and Mugabe each asked what this contract was and with whom it had been agreed. The two PF leaders knew they could pressure Chairman Richard to distance his own position from what Kissinger had promised to Smith in September.

Smith and Richard then disagreed on the five points, with Richard asserting the familiar British response that “the [five] points were a basis for discussion at the conference.” Mugabe jumped in, asking Richard “if he would confirm that the British Government was not a party to the agreement.” According to the minutes of the meeting, the Chairman did so. Smith then stated that he “could not agree with what

¹⁴ “Meeting of Heads of Delegations at the Palais des Nations on 2 November at 3:30 p.m.,” November 2, 1976, item 88, FCO36/1803, BNA.

¹⁵ Jamie Miller, *An African Volk: The Apartheid Regime and Its Search for Survival* (Oxford University Press, 2016) 152.

¹⁶ “Meeting of Heads of Delegations at the Palais des Nations on 2 November at 3:30 p.m.,” November 2, 1976, item 88, FCO36/1803, BNA.

the Chairman had said.” Here, Smith summarized the conditions which others have identified as Kissinger’s promises to Smith: “At his meeting with Dr. Kissinger he [Smith] had been satisfied that the latter was speaking on behalf of the American and British Governments and that he had consulted the four Black Presidents who had, in turn, cleared their lines with the Nationalist leaders.” Here, Smith put the blame on Kissinger, telling Richard, “Perhaps he had been misled; but he himself had been clear and consistent throughout.”¹⁷

Such interactions at Geneva demonstrate how well the nationalist leaders took advantage of both Smith’s intransigence and his pattern of falling back on a position that presented him as a victim of another power’s deceptiveness. Smith tried again to get Richard to accept his position as the starting point for negotiations, but once more Richard chose to agree with the nationalists. “The Chairman told Mr. Smith that he was asking too much for the delegates to be bound by an agreement on which they had not been consulted.” The discussion then returned to a possible date of independence. Smith’s party stuck to their original two years or more, while the nationalists were supportive of one year to eighteen months.¹⁸

Mugabe, Nkomo, and the Americans at Geneva

While the British were somewhat more familiar with Mugabe since the new generation of British diplomats first met with him in Mozambique in 1975, the Americans were much less familiar with him. The first American to meet with Mugabe at the Geneva conference was Frank Wisner Jr., a key American diplomat present in Geneva for the first month of the talks. Wisner reported he had gone to meet Mugabe in his hotel room on October 27 and that Mugabe, along with two of his aides “was tense and his approach both wary and intensive.” Mugabe accused Wisner and the Americans of keeping Kissinger’s plan a secret from him and sharing it only with Smith. This was a legitimate complaint. The Frontline State presidents had accused the Americans of a double standard in working out a plan first with Smith, and then presenting it as the basis for the negotiations at Geneva without the

¹⁷ “Meeting of Heads of Delegations at the Palais des Nations on 2 November at 3:30 p.m.,” November 2, 1976, item 88, FCO36/1803, BNA.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

African nationalist knowing exactly what Kissinger had offered Smith in exchange for Smith's September 24 speech accepting "majority rule." Wisner told Mugabe that the United States had given a copy to the British who would then make it available to conference participants.

Mugabe told Wisner that he was "suspicious of our motives" and asked why the United States "had never met with him" in preparation for the conference. Wisner explained that the United States relied on the Frontline State presidents, as designated by the OAU, to "find a Zimbabwe solution." Wisner then asked Mugabe to speak with him privately, and the two of them left Mugabe's advisors in the room and went to a corner to speak candidly. Wisner wrote: "During our conversation which was out of the earshot of his compatriots, Mugabe assured me that he had come to Geneva with a serious purpose and was intent on getting a settlement. Once we returned to the company of his colleagues he began his hard line again urging us to 'pressurize the British to pressurize Smith'."¹⁹

Mugabe had also impressed the US assistant secretary of state for African affairs, William E. Schaufele Jr., at a meeting on November 2, 1976. Schaufele's account of their encounter is reminiscent of the reports US diplomats sent back to Washington after meetings with Mugabe in the early 1960s. Schaufele related: "In what proved to be my most interesting and useful meeting with the nationalists, I spent almost an hour on Nov 2 with Robert Mugabe. Mugabe was relaxed and thoughtful. His questions were incisive." Schaufele believed the Americans were making progress with Mugabe, stating how, "[c]ompared to Wisner's meeting, Mugabe has overcome his initial reservations about the role we have played in the Rhodesian settlement."²⁰

Mugabe had once again demonstrated his diplomatic skills. Schaufele had made it clear to Mugabe "that if the conference failed we [the United States] would not be able to continue in our role but if violence led to foreign intervention from outside Africa the U.S. could

¹⁹ US Mission Geneva to Sec State Washington for Schaufele from Wisner "Rhodesian Conference; Meeting with Mugabe," 1976Geneva08443, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

²⁰ Schaufele to State, "Rhodesian Conference: Nov 2 meeting with Robert Mugabe," 1976GENEVA064852, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

not accept it.” Mugabe replied by telling Schaufele how “gratifying” it was to have the United States involved after years in which “Britain had failed to assume its responsibilities as a colonial power and move effectively to ‘decolonize Rhodesia’.” Mugabe went on to assure Schaufele “that neither he nor his associates enjoyed military action. ‘We are not a warlike people but nationalists were forced to take up arms because of Britain’s failures and the inability of the West to do much more than pass ‘pious resolutions’.” Mugabe reassured Schaufele that the PF had no intention of creating Soviet or Chinese puppet states: “Of course the nationalists had accepted arms from Russia and China but ‘we are not committed to their policies nor prepared to subject ourselves to them’, he said.”²¹

Schaufele asked Mugabe how cooperation was going among nationalists. Mugabe described his relationship with Nkomo as “particularly good and deepening.” He said, “Muzorewa wishes to work with him and Mugabe can’t ignore this request since much of internal ZANU is committed to Muzorewa’s ANC.” He also said that Muzorewa and Nkomo were unlikely to form an alliance because of “Muzorewa’s personal difficulties with Nkomo.” In closing, “Mugabe indicated he would like to stay in close touch” and urged that the United States “understand he and his ZANU allies were not tools of Soviet power.”²² The American diplomats were left with an impression of Mugabe as a leader grateful for US intervention into the diplomatic stalemate, which he blamed on the British.

A third meeting occurred on November 17 between Mugabe and John E. Reinhardt, an African-American diplomat who served as US Ambassador to Nigeria from 1971–75 and attended Geneva as US undersecretary for public affairs in the Ford Administration. Reinhardt reported that Mugabe’s “comportment was much tougher than had been the case in his meetings with Schaufele and Wisner.”²³ Reinhardt described Mugabe as “stubborn, argumentative and occasionally unpleasant.” Mugabe was accompanied by his close adviser Mukudzei Mudzi and ZANU’s US representative, Tapson Mawere. Mawere complained to Reinhardt about the lack of contact between

²¹ Ibid. ²² Ibid.

²³ From Geneva to State, “Rhodesia Conference: November 17 Meetings with Muzorewa, Sithole and Mugabe,” November 17, 1976, 1976GENEVA0918, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

Kissinger and Mugabe leading up to Geneva, given that Kissinger had met with Nkomo twice before the conference. He was upset that Kissinger reportedly had “never heard of Mugabe.” Mawere complained that the United States was denying “ZANU students” scholarships to American universities, and Mugabe suggested that the United States “discriminated against ZANU.”

Ambassador Reinhardt asked Mugabe, “How much room there was for compromise between the position he was advancing and those of the other parties at the conference?” Mugabe “laughed and indicated that he did not think there was much.” Reinhardt reported that he “found the meeting with Mugabe most disappointing and was struck by his stern intransigence,” adding that “[Ivor] Richard’s term ‘wild men’ seemed today to fit comrade Mugabe and his group well.”²⁴ Perhaps the chronology of these meetings helps explain why Mugabe became increasingly less diplomatic by mid-November. The US presidential elections had been decided. Kissinger was no longer relevant, and Ian Smith had left Geneva immediately after learning Ford had lost. Additionally, Mugabe was now on much firmer ground with the Frontline State presidents given his growing leadership role within ZANU and the PF by the end of the Geneva talks.

One reason for Mugabe’s increased confidence was the legitimation he had received from the former ZANU military leaders who had been released from Zambian jails to come to Geneva. The reason for his continued intransigence, however, was in part the lack of confidence he had in his own leadership role over ZANLA and ZIPA. Unwittingly, the Frontline State presidents, the British, and the Americans, and even Joshua Nkomo, had played a role in asserting Mugabe’s leadership role over ZIPA. After the conference began and Tongogara did, in fact, appear in Geneva to support Mugabe, Edward Ndlovu, Nkomo’s confidant and member of the ZAPU Geneva delegation, would tell the Americans that it was Nkomo “and no one else – who convinced Kaunda to release Tongogara and his associates.” Ndlovu also told the Americans, “Mugabe is not in charge. The ZANU central committee has only agreed to let him act as the conference spokesman.”²⁵

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Geneva to Am Embassy London, “Rhodesia Conference: November 9 Meetings with the Nationalists,” November 10, 1976, 1976Geneva276753, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA. Luise White describes the intrigue and speculation as to why

Ambassador Reinhardt would also meet with the Rhodesian Front delegation on November 18 at the Hotel du Rhone. The account of the meeting prepared by the Rhodesians is an interesting example of an African-American diplomat meeting, along with Frank Wisner, with P. K. van der Byl, H. G. Squires, and J. F. Gaylard. All three of the Rhodesian representatives were Rhodesian Front hardliners left in Geneva by Smith after he had already returned to Salisbury. Predictably, the Rhodesian diplomats complained about Richard and the lengthy negotiations over the independence date. Van der Byl praised Kissinger's role, calling it "impeccable." The biggest complaint against the British was their acceptance of a future role in Rhodesia. Squires said that "Rhodesia had never been under British control and this was a source of considerable national pride." Van der Byl emphasized the importance of keeping the defense and security ministries under "white control." He argued this was "because of the crucial importance of the black policemen and soldiers." Van der Byl used the Congolese example to support his argument. "He reminded Mr. Reinhardt of the chaos that had occurred in the Congo when effective control of the *Force Publique* had been lost." Van der Byl asserted that if the Rhodesians were "pressurized into making further concessions," there would be a backlash from whites and also "there would be a major backlash from policemen, soldiers, and civil servants."²⁶

Reinhardt also responded to questions from the Rhodesians about American domestic politics. Squires asked him for his view of a point of view, based on comments by the influential congressional representative Charles Diggs, who "had forecast a change of attitude on the part of the United States Government towards Africa because in several key

Nkomo assisted Mugabe in gaining the release of Tongogara and the others held for the murder of Chitepo. See Luise White, *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo: Texts and Politics in Zimbabwe*. (Indiana University Press, 2003), 89–90. David Moore suggests that the British played a key role in convincing the Zambian courts to free these ZANU leaders, and Wilf Mhanda argues that ZIPA had been lobbying for the release of the ZANU/ZANLA leaders as well. See Wilfred Mhanda, *Dzino: Memories of a Freedom Fighter* (Harare: Weaver, 2011), 148–55.

²⁶ "Record of a Meeting at the Hotel du Rhone at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, 18 November, 1976, Present: Mr. P. K. van der Byl, Mr. H. G. Squires, Mr. J. F. Gaylard, Mr. Reinhardt, Mr. F. Wisner," Folder Geneva Conference Informal Meetings (American), Smith Papers, 4 005 (M).

states Carter had carried the day with the help of the negro vote.” Ambassador Reinhardt replied that “he disagreed with this assessment but there were certain points beyond which any American administration could not go. He agreed that a political leader must take cognisance of trends in public opinion but he did not believe that the American policy would be very different after 20th January.” That was the date when the Carter administration would come into power. Squires replied, “We would welcome the sort of down-to-earth assessment which the Americans made instead of the unrealistic thinking of the British.”

At one point in the discussion, Reinhardt used the Cold war race state language by talking about “the blacks”: “Mr. Reinhardt said that it should be clear to the blacks that this was their last opportunity. If they now deliberately chose the course of violence none of them would survive.” This was a pretty harsh assessment of the situation. Squires agreed with Reinhardt, and then Gaylard continued by offering his view of Nkomo’s political fortunes, describing how Nkomo’s “stocks were high” when he was negotiating directly with Smith in 1975. “He was getting plenty of publicity and he appeared to be an effective leader.” At Geneva, Gaylard added, Nkomo was “giving the impression of tagging along behind Mugabe and this was not enhancing his image among the Africans in Rhodesia.”²⁷

One question that troubled the Americans and British at Geneva was why Nkomo had partnered with Mugabe rather than Bishop Muzorewa. The previous chapters have shown why a Nkomo–Muzorewa alliance was a nonstarter, but still there were plenty of answers given to the Americans. Ian Smith had offered his own answer to this question, suggesting to Richard early in the Geneva Conference, on October 23, that Nkomo would not have wanted to partner with Mugabe, but thought Muzorewa was becoming too popular, so he needed to align with Mugabe to compete with Muzorewa’s status inside Rhodesia.²⁸ Richard told Smith that “he hoped that one possible outcome would be a government led by Mr Nkomo and Bishop Muzorewa.” Responding to this scenario, Smith “thought that the Bishop had greater popular

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ “Record of a Conversation between the Chairman of the Conference and the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 23 October at 11 a.m.,” item 9, FCO36/1802, BNA.

support within Rhodesia than Mr Nkomo, though the latter was a more impressive personality with greater qualities of leadership.”²⁹

Post-Geneva International Diplomacy around Rhodesia and Zimbabwe

Summing up the Geneva conference in the January–February 1977 issue of the *Zimbabwe News*, ZANU’s writers claimed that the calling of the conference by Britain was a “culmination of a series of behind-the-scenes imperialist maneuvers in their persistent bid to try and hijack the determined efforts and resolute prosecution of the armed struggle by the struggling masses of Zimbabwe, under, ‘the leadership of their legitimate political movements which have formed the PF’ of ZANU and ANC(Z).” The article continued: “Geneva was to be an internationally sponsored political fraud where the imperialists were to strip Smith and his racist thugs of only political power and reinvest this power in the hands of ‘moderate and responsible’ African puppets.” The writers then offered ZANU as the only truly vanguard party who could defend the revolutionary character of the struggle. They claimed ZANU would avoid the problems that Lenin had predicted, that of the need to “smash the colonial institutions,” as “[o]nly the PF delegation stood for the defence of the gains of the workers and peasants of Zimbabwe, and their determination to establish a truly free, democratic, socialist republic.”³⁰

Such revolutionary rhetoric somewhat failed to align with the practical experiences of the ZANU and ZIPA representatives at Geneva. Fay Chung has described the problems ZANU representatives encountered in their accommodation arrangements and living conditions.³¹ From the beginning, both ZAPU and ZANU argued that the living expense stipends were insufficient given the high cost of hotels in Geneva. There were many offers to help the nationalists pay for their hotels, mostly from Tiny Rowland of Lonrho, the Swedish Government, and Zaire’s Mobutu. In the end, the ZANU delegation was bailed out, not so much by these supportive capitalists and western

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ “Geneva Conference on Zimbabwe” and “Lessons of the Conference,” *Zimbabwe News*, vol. 9, no. 2, January–February 1977, Maputo, 6–9.

³¹ Fay Chung, *Re-living the Second Chimurenga: Memories from the Liberation Struggle in Zimbabwe* (Uppsala, Sweden: Nordic Africa Institute 2006), 165.

governments, but by the fire that destroyed Rex Nhongo's room and some adjacent rooms. Blessing-Miles Tendi, in his biography of Solomon Mujuru, indicates that both Tekere and Mugabe admit that they blamed the fire on the Rhodesians, "to make the Geneva talks even more intractable, but in actuality, Nhongo had started the fire."³²

British diplomats in Geneva visited the hotel manager after the delegation had left to make sure everything was settled. The manager explained that the delegation had left the hotel an unpaid bar and room service bill of 36,000 Swiss francs. According to the hotel's manager, he wasn't too worried about the outstanding bills because the insurance payment for the fire had more than covered what was owed. He even asked the British when the ZANU delegation might be back as he wanted to host them again. Apparently, their vanguardist tastes were good for business.³³

Bishop Muzorewa, in fact, complained in a letter to Richard about the lack of progress at the conference and the excesses of some of the delegates. Writing on November 26, Muzorewa asked Richard to "remember that we have now spent over a month in Geneva either discussing the question of fixing a date for the independence of Zimbabwe or literally doing nothing." Muzorewa complained that a whole week had passed without any information from Richard "about the prospects of holding either a plenary session or bilateral meetings." Muzorewa also commented on the morality of the situation, with the delay in independence by a month, "while some people are wining, dining, bickering and dithering in expensive, luxurious and posh hotels of Geneva, a city in a free and independent Switzerland."³⁴

³² Blessing-Miles Tendi, *The Army and Politics in Zimbabwe: Mujuru, the Liberation Fighter and Kingmaker* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), 91.

³³ 36,000 Swiss francs was the equivalent of \$37,000 or £28,000 in 1976. See D. A. Martson to Mr. Harrison and Mr. Laver, "Lonrho and the Geneva Conference," November 4, 1976, item 470, FCO36/1848; Crosland to Oslo (telno 180), November 8, 1976, "Your telno 260 of 4 November," item 461, FCO36/1848, BNA; R. H. J. Ashton to J. N. Allan, "Mugabe Delegation and the Hotel Royal," December 29, 1976 item 490, FCO36/1848, BNA; J. N. Allan to M. O'D. B. Alexander, "Rhodesia Conference: Call on Swiss Mission on 17 December," December 21, 1976, item 491, FCO36/1848, BNA; Bottomley UK Mission Geneva to FCO (telno 521), December 26, 1976, "Fire in Hotel," item 282, FCO36/1808, BNA.

³⁴ R. J. Spencer, "Call on Bishop Muzorewa," November 26, 1976 (letter attached is addressed to Ivor Richard from Bishop Muzorewa), item 370, FCO36/1808, BNA.

Toward the end of the conference, Muzorewa and Sithole had reasons to be frustrated by some disturbing developments for their own positions as leaders. Some members of Muzorewa's United African National Council had joined the PF during the conference, and it was obvious to them that the British and Americans were more concerned with the PF's point of view than those of Muzorewa or Sithole. A memo from Robin Byatt indicated that Frank Wisner had reported to him a conversation between Botswana's Foreign Minister Archibald Mogwe and Bishop Muzorewa on November 26, where Mogwe "urged on the Bishop that the time had come when he must decide to let bygones be bygones and make his peace with Nkomo." According to Wisner, Muzorewa's reply to Mogwe was "that he had approached Nkomo for that purpose twice during the last ten days and had been rebuffed on each occasion. However, the Bishop indicated that he was prepared to turn a third cheek."³⁵

While the hope of Muzorewa working with Nkomo failed to take root at Geneva, the Frontline State presidents and the PF had put forth serious claims that Smith would not move forward with realistic negotiations unless the British were willing to exert their authority into the process. Frank Wisner recounts a meeting on November 29 with Ambassador Richard, where Reinhardt recounted what he had heard from President Kaunda. "The latter [Kaunda] felt himself no longer bound by the five points. He had urged that Dr. Kissinger should persuade the British Government to appoint a Governor General." Richard still held out against the idea of the British taking a more direct role. "Richard said that it was just conceivable that Ministers might agree to our playing a balancing role, but we could not undertake executive responsibility in the traditional way."³⁶

By the end of the conference, Zambia's Mark Chona was pushing for an agreement allowing the PF to take power before elections, which would have been to Nkomo's advantage. Britain's Robin Byatt wrote to the FCO that Frank Wisner had approached him at Geneva to see if he agreed with his recommendation to not accept Chona's proposal. According to Byatt, Chona had told Wisner that "the time had come for the Americans to decide that their own best interests lay in going along

³⁵ R. A. C. Byatt to Sir A. Duff, "Relations between Muzorewa and Nkomo," November 29, 1976, item 372, FCO36/1808, BNA.

³⁶ J. R. Young, "Note for the Record Call by Mr. Wisner," November 29, 1976, item 373, FCO36/1808, BNA.

with a PF dominated government, which might well endure beyond independence if one dispensed with elections, since this was the only basis on which the front-line Presidents could guarantee to deliver the freedom fighters.” This is an interesting claim, and while it may have been Chona’s opinion in late 1976, it would not be a unified position of the Frontline State presidents as the war continued. A particular stumbling block for them was that “Chona claims to see Nkomo as the senior partner and Mugabe as the junior partner in such a government.” Byatt agreed with Wisner’s view that he should not recommend what Chona had proposed to the State Department. Byatt added, “To indicate any interest in Chona’s ideas at this juncture would tend to pull the rug from the under the conference.” Byatt continued, “One of the conclusions Wisner draws from Chona’s comments is that the Zambians attached prime importance to maintain the cohesion of the front-line Presidents. They and Botswana favour Nkomo, while Nyerere and Machel prefer Mugabe or ZIPA. Therefore the front-line alliance can only be maintained by keeping the PF together.”³⁷

British Views of Nkomo and Mugabe at Geneva

While the Americans enquired about the relative strengths of the possible leadership alliances, the FCO’s Rhodesia Office’s Rosemary Spencer delivered a substantive report on the topic in a paper dated November 22. Spencer and her colleagues provided an analysis of the motivations of the four main Zimbabwean nationalists. Her interpretation is guided by the typical fascination in the FCO with ethnic divisions, or what was then referred to as “tribalism,” but the report offers useful insights into FCO thinking on the motivations of Nkomo, in particular, for entering into the PF alliance.³⁸ On Nkomo, Spencer’s paper states: “He sees himself as the grand old man of Zimbabwe nationalist politics, with a presumptive right to the top political position in an independent Zimbabwe. He is leader of the best-run political

³⁷ R. A. C. Byatt to Rm Mansfield, “Chona’s Discussions with Mr. Wisner,” December 1, 1976, item 375, FCO36/1808, BNA.

³⁸ The report lists the tribal affiliations of the nationalist leaders as follows: “Joshua Nkomo, generally regarded as being Ndebele, but claimed by some to be Kalanga; Bishop Muzorewa, Shona/Manyika; Robert Mugabe, Shona/Zezere; Ndabaningi Sithole, Shona/Ndau; Josiah Tongogara, Shona/Karanga; Rex Nhongo, Shona/probably Karanga.” R. J. Spencer to J. C. Harrison, “The Nationalist Delegations,” November 26, 1976, item 317, FCO 36/1807, BNA.

organisation inside Zimbabwe.” The next point is that he is handicapped by his ethnicity, in that “although his party executive are mainly Shona, his popular support is drawn from the Ndebele who make up 20 per cent of Rhodesia’s population. (He has no Karanga following.)” The last point reflects the FCO’s obsession with the Karanga. Spencer goes on to say that Nkomo’s own guerrilla army only has “an estimated 200 trained cadres.” She praises his delegation for being “solid and cohesive,” and points out some “tough-minded” individuals, such as Jason Moyo, “who commands the respect of the all the guerrillas and is also known to have close links with the Russians.”³⁹

Spencer believed Nkomo wanted a settlement at Geneva, in part so he could “effectively neutralize the guerrillas based in Mozambique and Tanzania and could set up a transitional government which would give full rein to his superior political abilities – as he sees them – and his good party organisation.”⁴⁰ She presumes Nkomo would like to be the leader of the transitional government, under the premise that he would then have an advantage in elections. Spencer labels the PF as “essentially a marriage of convenience which is privately opposed by many of his supporters.” Although she recognizes that the PF was forced on Nkomo by the Frontline State presidents in order to facilitate the Geneva conference, Spencer also notes that the alliance presented “some opportunistic attraction for Nkomo himself, as it has given him a chance to demonstrate that he is prepared to take a tough line and thus to restore his credibility among the harder-line nationalists, which suffered as a result of his talks with Smith last year.” Spencer also notes that Nkomo’s image in the Western press as “a moderate” had added to the “widely” held perception that he has the backing of the British and the Americans. “He would no doubt like to believe that the alliance has brought the combined strength of the main guerrilla army and the ZAPU forces together behind himself and Mugabe.” Spencer’s report concludes by stating she did not believe Nkomo would be willing to split from Mugabe at the conference.

The report then turns to Mugabe, starting out with the ethnicity of his followers, who are identified as mostly Karanga, “though he himself

³⁹ R. J. Spencer to J. C. Harrison “The Nationalist Delegations,” November 26, 1976, item 317, FCO36/1807, BNA.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

is half-Zezeru.” The next point was hardly a ringing endorsement: “He has assumed the political representation of the guerrilla faction mainly because he is the only political figure to whom the majority of the guerrillas have not taken strong objection.”⁴¹ The report notes that Mugabe was not part of ZIPA, “and this indicates that he is not yet won the complete acceptance of the guerrillas.” The pressure from the Frontline State presidents for Mugabe to join the PF was seen as an attempt to help Mugabe gain support inside Rhodesia, as he had very little at the time. “One of the aims of the front-line Presidents in promoting the formation of the PF was to combine Nkomo’s political following with Mugabe’s representation of the guerrillas, however tenuous.” The new alliance was also recognized as helpful to Mugabe, because Nkomo was able to secure “the release of the ZANU detainees in Zambia and brought Zambian-based guerrillas under the joint control (at least nominally) of himself and Nkomo.”⁴²

The FCO’s assessment of Mugabe’s performance at the conference, echoing somewhat that of the Americans, saw Mugabe as “controlled” by his more radical advisors, and forced to take a more hard-line position. Spencer’s report states: “But his [Mugabe’s] performance at the conference does not indicate a man of depth or substance. He appears to be dominated by the wilder members of his delegation, notably Mudzi (who spent five years studying ‘People’s Law’ in Leningrad) and Tekere.” Spencer describes how, during the course of the conference, “Mugabe has shown himself increasingly shallow and little more than a prisoner of and spokesman for his group. He declines to attend any meetings unless at least some of his supporters are present.” Spencer noted how “[o]n the rare occasions when we have seen him for a minute or two alone with Nkomo, he seemed agreeable and relaxed – quite different from the aggressively rude character he usually presents.”⁴³ Spencer argued that at Geneva, ZANU seemed to want a settlement similar to the one FRELIMO achieved, where they could control the transitional government, the military, and the “disbanding of the Rhodesian army.”⁴⁴ But if these conditions were not met, they were willing to return to the battlefield.

At this stage, in ethnic terms, the British saw Mugabe as the voice of the “Karanga,” who, according to the report, “want an independent Zimbabwe with a Karanga-dominated Government which they feel

⁴¹ Ibid. ⁴² Ibid. ⁴³ Ibid. ⁴⁴ Ibid.

they have earned through their part in the guerrilla war.”⁴⁵ Given this situation, the British were unsure what Mugabe would personally accept, suggesting that he “must have some doubts about his ability to continue to ride the Karanga tiger through the transitional period and into independence. His delegation is less disciplined, and his control of lieutenants less evident, than in the case of the other leaders.”⁴⁶ By the end of November, the general assessment of the conference among the British was that there was little to no chance of getting all the nationalists to work together, and that the Mugabe faction of the PF was not interested in reaching an agreement that did not meet their demands for complete control of the transition.

African Leaders' Reading of Mugabe versus Nkomo

Commenting on a meeting with the Nigerian leadership in Lagos over Rhodesia in September 1976, American diplomats were a bit surprised that the new Nigerian leader, General Joseph Garba, couldn't remember Mugabe's name, and had to ask an aide, “Who's that third-force fellow we met?”⁴⁷ While the exchange points to the relative obscurity of Mugabe within some African diplomatic circles before the Geneva talks, it also shows that Mugabe had managed to circulate his case among key Commonwealth and OAU members prior to Geneva. As Wilf Mhanda remembered it, Nyerere used the term “Third Force” in order to avoid confusion about which faction was capable of receiving OAU Liberation Committee funding, and to stress the need for unity. ZIPA's military successes in early 1976, Mhanda argued, led to the acceptance of a merged ZANLA and ZIPRA command within ZIPA by mid-1976.⁴⁸ While ZIPA was making progress on the military front, Mugabe managed to consolidate his leadership over ZIPA through international meetings where he presented himself as the sole leader of ZIPA. But as Nyerere had indicated, Mugabe did not actually lead ZIPA at the Geneva conference, although the ZIPA leaders would

⁴⁵ Ibid. ⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Garba had only come to power three months earlier leading a coup against General Yakubu Gowon. American Embassy Lagos to American Embassy London, “Rowland-Duff Visit to Lagos,” Document Number: 1976LAGOS10193, September 3, 1976, RG 59, USNA.

⁴⁸ Wilf Mhanda, “Chronological Developments Leading to the Geneva Conference,” April 17, 2011. Personal communication with the author. See also Mhanda, *Dzino*.

endorse him as their political representative for the purposes of the conference.

Geneva also provided Mugabe the opportunity to meet with African leaders. On November 6, 1976, Mugabe travelled from Geneva to the resort town of Savigny to meet with Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko. Apparently, Mobutu had hoped to meet with all the Zimbabwean nationalist leaders and then send his views of each to the US secretary of state. Mobutu's opinion of Mugabe seemed to be fixated on his recognition of Mugabe's ambitions to use Nkomo in the PF. The account of this Mobutu–Mugabe meeting comes third hand to the Americans through Mobutu's liaison in Geneva. The unnamed liaison tells how "Mobutu had been unimpressed with Mugabe during their November 6 meeting in Savigny. He found, during the course of the conversation, that Mugabe skillfully advanced rhetorical arguments but was incapable of analyzing serious long-term problems."⁴⁹ Mobutu was also more interested in Mugabe's motives for exploiting his rivals, something at which Mobutu was obviously quite skilled.

According to this account, Mugabe explained to Mobutu how there had been attempts to unite all the nationalist leaders before Geneva, but that only Nkomo and Mugabe were able to agree. This was because the two of them had armies of their own, while Muzorewa and Sithole lacked their own armies. Mugabe then reportedly "promised that he and Nkomo would do everything possible to unite their armies." He also stated that while the unification "would permit Nkomo and Mugabe to control the situation ... the unification could not proceed without difficulties."⁵⁰ Mobutu, in his personal comments to the US State Department, saw through the veneer of cooperation in the PF position forwarded by Mugabe and Nkomo, and warned of trouble down the road: "We [Zaire] concluded from the meeting that Mugabe wishes to take advantage of Nkomo in order to penetrate the interior of Zimbabwe and install himself there ... We have also observed that Mugabe has as his special mission the taming of Nkomo." Mobutu also

⁴⁹ Mobutu commented on Mugabe's dependence on others: "Mugabe appears to be dependent on his advisor Mukudzei Mudzi." Mudzi had been one of the detained ZANU leaders sent to Geneva from Zambia.

⁵⁰ For Schaufele from Wisner, "Rhodesia conference: Mobutu's November 6 Meeting with Mugabe," November 12, 1976, 1976GENEVA09022, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

wanted to paint Mugabe as a communist: "We also noticed that Mugabe, by his language, is completely aligned with the communist cause. It is easy to see that he has been given careful ideological preparation by the leaders in Maputo."⁵¹ Mobutu's reading of the situation, in retrospect, is much closer to how the actual situation would unfold, in terms of Mugabe's ambitions, than to the American diplomats' reading of Mugabe at Geneva. However, by the mid-1970s, Mobutu's opinions were taken with a large dose of cynicism back at the State Department. For example, on hearing reports from the Zairian foreign minister, Bernard Nguza, that there were Soviet weapons ("including some SAMS") in Dar es Salaam awaiting distribution to ZAPU forces in Zambia, the US embassy in Kinshasa commented that Zaire "obviously has its own reasons to bring to our attention any evidence of communist assistance in preparing for another armed conflict in Southern Africa."⁵²

Regardless of their apparent ideological differences, Mugabe was not above asking Mobutu for financial assistance. At the end of the meeting, and after Nkomo had left, Mugabe "informed the president [Mobutu] that he could not carry out decisive action without the aid of Zaire. Mugabe requested immediate assistance, for his delegation in Geneva is suffering from financial difficulties." Mugabe explained how he and the ZANU delegation had been forced to check out of the Intercontinental Hotel in Geneva and move to the Royal Hotel because of lack of funds. Similarly to requests for funds from the Americans while in Dar es Salaam in the 1960s, Mugabe asked Mobutu's help in paying hotel bills. Mobutu "accepted the latter request and gave Mugabe \$12,500 to help him with the stay of his delegation in Geneva."⁵³ While this \$12,500 may seem to indicate American support for Mugabe via their intermediary, Mobutu, the record shows Mobutu saw Mugabe as a threat – not necessarily because he viewed him as a capable leader, but because if Mugabe were to come to power, Mobutu believed one of

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Kinshasa to State, "GOZ Reports Arrival of Soviet Arms in Tanzania," November 24, 1976, 1976KINSHA09874, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

⁵³ Mugabe also asked if he could come to Kinshasa to meet with Mobutu in order to "explain his problems in greater detail and spell out his requirements for assistance." For Schaufele from Wisner, "Rhodesia conference: Mobutu's November 6 Meeting with Mugabe," November 12, 1976, 1976GENEVA09022, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

the more radical young leaders would carry out a coup against him. While at Geneva, Mobutu also gave \$50,000 to Nkomo, \$50,000 to Muzorewa, and \$25,000 to Sithole.⁵⁴ In comparison, Mugabe's \$12,500 for hotel bills seems less than a full endorsement.

Mobutu had also met with Nkomo and the other nationalist leaders. He even met with the Rhodesians. According to an account of Mobutu's meetings with Nkomo, it was said that "Nkomo asked Mobutu that African chiefs of State use their influence to help him reduce the power of ZANU which is directed by Nyerere and Machel." Mobutu's aide also described to the Americans Nkomo's alleged plan to marginalize Mugabe at Geneva. Mobutu cabled the Americans to say that Nkomo had told him "ZANU has no real leader" and that "Mugabe was imposed from the outside but is not popular and is not known within Rhodesia." According to the Zairian account, "Nkomo asked President Mobutu to give him the financial assistance necessary to recruit a man of confidence in Mugabe's camp in order to counter-balance Mugabe. This would permit Nkomo to defuse the threat which ZANU, Mugabe, and his masters pose." Mobutu told Nkomo, however, that Zaire could not help, and advised the Americans to "deal directly with Nkomo," as "[h]e is willing to act as an intermediary, if we so wish." According to Mobutu, Nkomo believed the issue of deciding on a date for independence – the issue that held up the conference for weeks – could be agreed on quickly, but "the only obstacle remaining in settling that issue is the intransigence of Mugabe who does not have the ability to make a decision alone."⁵⁵ Wisner, who sent this cable to William Schaufele, didn't agree with Mobutu's idea that the United States should help Nkomo with funds to basically "buy off" some of the ZANU leaders to move away from

⁵⁴ From Geneva for the Secretary from Schaufele, "Rhodesian Conference: Oct 30 Meeting With Richard," October 30, 1976, 1976GENEVA08557, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

⁵⁵ N'Banda reportedly told Wisner: "Nkomo has not decided who within the Mugabe camp he can turn to his side but is certain that with money and the promise of a future position of influence he will be able to convince one or more important members of the ZANU delegation. Nkomo provided no specific plan to Mobutu nor did he tell Mobutu how much help he would require." From Geneva to State, "Rhodesia Conference: Mobutu Proposes That We Take Sides," November 15, 1976, 1976GENEVA09067, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973–1976, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, USNA.

Mugabe. Wisner held that Mobutu hadn't been at the conference, and nor was the conference even complete. He concluded, "I believe it is too early for us to be involved in selling an Nkomo dominated government." Wisner acknowledged Mobutu as a "skillful operator," but he thought it was "in our interest that he plays a quiet hand."⁵⁶

Nkomo and Mugabe at Geneva

By December, Geneva's failures were clear. However, Nkomo was still reporting positively about the conference in interviews to the Rhodesian media. In an interview with Ross Fairbairn for the *Herald* newspaper in Salisbury, Nkomo explained that Ian Smith should return to Geneva and the talks should continue. He also sought to reassure whites in Rhodesia about his alliance with Mugabe in the PF. Nkomo sought to reassure people that he had not been changed by the formation of the PF, stating, "I am a realist. Mr Mugabe is the leader of Zanu and you cannot ignore the party or him. He has to be taken into account in solving the problems." Nkomo went on to say, "We do not want fighting between Zanu and Zanu. We don't want our people to wage a war after finally getting the freedom they have strived to achieve for years."⁵⁷ Nkomo had voiced similar optimism about the Geneva conference in an interview with Denis Sargent from Geneva published in the *Herald* on the fourth of December. Nkomo explained that the opinion among whites that the leaders of the liberation movements "would like to see whites wiped out," was "completely mistaken." Nkomo stated how, "I have struggled almost 30 years to remove an evil, the separation of people by races." He further emphasized this point by saying, "We regard people as people, and white people as people like ourselves, with the emphasis on the people, not on the white."⁵⁸

Problems at Geneva with Annex C and the Five Points

The importance of the Annex C issue at Geneva was that Kissinger had hoped that the provisions for a fund to help keep white Rhodesians

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ "Military Power is the Key Factor Says Nkomo," *The Rhodesian Herald*, December 6, 1976, 1.

⁵⁸ "Nkomo Hints That the PF Could Be Permanent," *The Rhodesia Herald*, December 4, 1976, 4.

from leaving the country upon independence was a significant “carrot” to gain Smith’s cooperation. Kissinger had hoped that Smith would have “tabled” Annex C during the Geneva Conference in order to make the question of helping “the whites” the basis for future negotiations, particularly as Kissinger had agreed with Smith to include a revised five points that provided white control of a Council of State, the military, and “law and order” during the transition period. Annex C also promised more British assistance and protections of white-owned commercial farms and pensions for whites in Rhodesia. The British were therefore quite agitated when they found out that Kissinger had provided Annex C to the South Africans and Rhodesians as real position papers agreed to by the United States and Britain.⁵⁹

Ambassador Richard had raised the issue with Smith at Geneva, asking him if he would table Annex C at the conference, but Smith refused to do so. To a certain extent Smith’s refusal went against Kissinger’s plan, leaving the Geneva talks all the more unproductive. When Kissinger asked Richard about what happened to the Anglo-American plan at a December 10 follow-up meeting in London, Richard told Kissinger, “Annex C as such is not a starter. It is very hard to see how if it was tabled as a conference document, or if Smith tabled it, it could bridge the gap.” Richard told Kissinger that “[b]asically the nationalists all say there can be no Council of State or anything that smacks of it.” What Richard meant here was that Nkomo and Mugabe refused to concede any role for Smith and his people in the transition. They wanted the British to be in charge of the transition, and they were not going to allow whites to remain in charge of the military or “law and order,” or the proposed Council of State.⁶⁰

Richard told Kissinger that he thought an adjournment until mid-January was in order. There was a brief joke made by Crosland that

⁵⁹ See items 11 to 27 of FCO 36/1802 for a number of telegrams between Washington, DC, London, and Geneva on ways to control the damage of Smith’s mentioning of Annex C as the basis for white control of the Council of State in a press conference. The British wanted it to be stated that Crosland had stated in parliament on October 12 that Annex C was not an officially approved document for negotiations. Kissinger disagreed. The Americans were also adamant that this Anglo-American disagreement was not made public in the run up to the US presidential election.

⁶⁰ Memcon Kissinger and Crosland, December 10, 1976, FCO London, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records of Henry Kissinger, 1973–1977, Box 19, NARA II.

they thought January 20 would be a good day, which was same day as President-elect Jimmy Carter's inauguration. Kissinger went along and said that "the only trouble is all the world press on that day would be filled with a picture of me being carried out in my chair." He said they should pick another day. They then continued to talk about why Annex C was not tabled by Smith. Kissinger suggested maybe he was told by the Anglo-Americans not to, and Wisner said it was Smith's own staff who had urged him not to, adding that Smith "is convinced that in the present mood it would be shot down." Kissinger pushed a bit harder and Richard read from his notes on why Smith refused to table it. "He felt in his view it would only create an explosion." Kissinger, who was usually the one to say things would "blow up," reflected on it and said "Then we better leave it as it is, because if we urge it we would be committed to back it."⁶¹

Having dropped the issue of Annex C, the British then briefed Kissinger on their new plans, which would replace the Council of State idea with the British Resident Commissioner, with a Council of Ministers chaired by the Resident Commissioner. Such a proposal was closer to what the Frontline State presidents and nationalists had asked for, and closer to the eventual decision made by the British to reinstate a Governor to oversee the transition and election in 1980. Crosland must have been made nervous by the proposal, because he interjected, "Just to clarify something. I've approved none of this. I just saw it an hour ago. But it is a promising approach." Kissinger, although having achieved in this plan what he had sought all along – greater British responsibility – also cautioned not to move too quickly. He described how he had written to Nyerere to let him know that "there was a possibility of a breakup, that there was a limit beyond which things couldn't be pushed." Kissinger described Nyerere's reply as conciliatory. Kissinger warned the British to not move too quickly for two reasons. First, he reminded them that "we got it to this point by combining our power with South African power." He warned, "If we don't bring the South Africans into it, what you work out with the blacks won't mean anything. I hate to see you and the blacks agree on something we couldn't deliver. He also warned that "this is a drastic change and the Rhodesians will possibly see it as total surrender to the

⁶¹ Ibid.

blacks.” Kissinger said he had instructed his people at Geneva “to talk about Annex C, not about getting rid of Smith.”⁶²

Kissinger wrapped up his experiences working on Rhodesia by saying that he thought if the conference were to end, “Nkomo is finished, and also Sithole and the Bishop.” The British disagreed with this assessment, and Kissinger replied, “One thing that has impressed us is their highly developed instinct for their survival. There is no chance they’d survive a guerrilla war.” The British under-secretary of state for foreign and Commonwealth affairs, Ted Rowlands, told Kissinger that “[p]arity is dead, so the question is how to give assurances and balances by other means than simply looking at the color of the faces around the table.” Kissinger replied with the epitome of a race state assessment: “What the whites fear most is – they’re not determined to prevent any action – but that the system after it’s set up, will be overthrown, as all other systems in Africa.” Crosland added, “This is what the blacks fear, too.” The discussion went on a bit longer and in the end, Crosland thanked Kissinger for his official service, saying, “In spite of your insistence not to learn our constitutional structure, and your telegrams that you send from the worst places in cannibal-land, you’ve been a great friend of this country.” The notetaker added (“Here, here”, from the British side).⁶³ So Crosland ended this chapter of the Anglo-American Rhodesia initiative on a racist note, signifying that the realities of Africa were still quite distant from his consciousness.

Kissinger would meet with Richard and other British diplomats in Washington, DC for a post-Geneva debriefing on December 21, 1976. Richard introduced new plans for moving the Rhodesian negotiations further. These will be discussed in the next chapter. What is important in this meeting, however, was the discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the African nationalists’ positions. Dennis Grennan, in particular, did not put much stock in ZIPA’s ability to challenge the Rhodesian military at this time, stating that “ZIPA isn’t such a problem.” Grennan was doubtful that ZIPA was anywhere near as threatening a force at the time, saying, “I just don’t believe Chona’s analysis that they’ve got 4–5,000 well-trained men.” Richard added, “They are school children and will go back to school.” Grennan replied that they were not like the MPLA, “who have been fighting for ten years.” Kissinger asked why Smith was negotiating if this were true.

⁶² Ibid. ⁶³ Ibid.

William Squire, from the British Embassy, interjected that for the white Rhodesians, “like with the Israelis, casualties . . . are serious.” Kissinger retorted, “But the Israelis don’t think they’ll lose.” Kissinger then addressed a key issue after the failure of Geneva, pointing out that it was the South Africans who got Smith to cooperate in September, “But they might decide this is a game they don’t want to play again.” Kissinger concluded, “*We don’t give a damn about Rhodesia*. The only reason we got into it is to set a pattern for the rest of Africa.”⁶⁴

The discussion then turned to the strategies of the nationalists, particularly Nkomo. Kissinger asked why, if Kaunda supported Nkomo, did Nkomo work with Mugabe? He added one of his typical generalizations about African nationalists, “One thing I’ve learned is they usually know how to take care of their own survival.” Grennan suggested that Nkomo was “misreading the situation.” Later, when discussing the next steps, Kissinger said to the British that Kaunda “will produce Nkomo.” Grennan suggested they should be careful to not go to Nkomo first, because “we don’t want early on to give the impression we’re trying to split him from Mugabe.” Richard explained that he had talked with Nkomo alone, without Mugabe, about four times in Geneva. “On the whole, you’re a lot better off seeing him alone; he’s reasonable.” Kissinger yet again interjected with one of his essentializing observations of African nationalists: “The Africans have impressed me with their cold-blooded appreciation of power.” Getting back to Grennan’s earlier point, he suggested that he “wouldn’t assume” Nkomo had made a mistake. “I’d ask what it is that makes him think it’s in his interest.” Grennan stuck with his opinion, however, and added that Nkomo “assumes he can control Mugabe,” which he viewed as Nkomo’s mistake. Kissinger, agreeing with Grennan, conceded the point.⁶⁵

When they met a few days later on December 24, 1976, Kissinger would tell South Africa’s ambassador to the United States, Pik Botha, that he had tried to get Richard to introduce and table Annex C but Richard had told him it was impossible. Kissinger then told Botha, “I told Richard – contrary to the public mythology, I believe in telling everyone the same thing – that I was concerned about two things. One,

⁶⁴ Memorandum of Conversation, UK: Ivor Richard and Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Washington, DC, December 21, 1976, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1969–1976, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa, 235.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

we had given our word on Annex C, and in eight years in public office I'd never broken my word. Second, we were afraid if it broke down, it would be an Angola-type situation.”⁶⁶

Conclusion

Kissinger would provide his own explanation for the failure of the Geneva talks in one of the volumes of his memoirs. He argues that because he and President Ford had become “lame ducks” almost immediately from the beginning of the talks – which began on October 28 shortly before Ford lost the election on November 2 – the talks were no longer taken seriously by the different parties. Ian Smith left Geneva the day after the US elections. Once this breakdown occurred, Kissinger argued that the British failed to take their own role seriously. Much of his description involved the infighting among British politicians over their roles in the talks. Kissinger agreed with a criticism by the Zimbabwean nationalists at the time. Placing Ivor Richard in charge of the talks was an indication of how little the British were willing to involve themselves in negotiations that might force them to play a larger role. Kissinger concluded by stating that the British intransigence and lack of urgency was partly responsible for Mugabe coming to power. “The price paid for the delay was that the radical factions of the guerrillas headed by Robert Mugabe assumed power under majority rule.” Kissinger also reflected on the split among the Frontline State presidents: “The delay worked much as Nyerere had hoped and Kaunda had feared – though Nyerere was to derive little joy from the ascendance of Mugabe, who proved to be an intractable partner.”⁶⁷ This is a convenient collapsing of the Geneva talks into the subsequent history of the liberation war, one that helps place Kissinger’s diplomacy in a better light. Kissinger had at first hoped to work with Kaunda and the other Frontline State presidents to speed up the negotiations in order to forestall Cuban and Soviet influence and to

⁶⁶ Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, DC, December 24, 1976, Ambassador R. F. Botha, Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, William E. Shaufele, National Security Staff, Peter W. Rodman, *Foreign Relations of The United States, 1969–1976*, Volume XXVIII, Southern Africa, 236. Italics added by author.

⁶⁷ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 1st ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 1015.

help Nkomo become the first Zimbabwean president; it was only after pressure from Nyerere that the Americans were introduced to Mugabe, who skillfully held out from accepting any form of negotiated settlement in order to secure his role as the political leader of ZANU, and the de facto political leader of ZIPA and ZANLA. The Geneva talks presented Mugabe an international stage to help solidify his reputation as a serious negotiator with the backing of the “boys with guns.” The way Nyerere and Kaunda orchestrated the appearances of both the ZANLA leaders, such as Tongogara, and the younger ZIPA leaders, such as Wilf Mhanda, as part of Mugabe’s delegation at Geneva would become Mugabe’s biggest victory. After Geneva, Mugabe used this diplomatic victory in the Mozambican camps to consolidate power with the help of Samora Machel. Mhanda argues that the Geneva talks helped convert Machel from a strong supporter of the younger ZIPA leaders to a supporter of Mugabe – only because Machel had become convinced that Kissinger’s diplomacy would transfer power to Zimbabweans within a matter of months. Mhanda writes of Machel: “[b]y forcing us [ZIPA commanders] to the conference as ZANU – essentially throwing his weight behind Mugabe’s argument, the one we had resisted in Lusaka and which had also been rejected by Nyerere – Machel effectively put an end to ZIPA’s existence.”⁶⁸ Part of this was due to Mugabe’s diplomatic skills and part of it had to do with the conflicting interests among the Frontline State presidents and within the Anglo-American camp. These differences would become more pronounced in the following three years of negotiations, and as argued in the following chapters, contributed to a failed attempt at a direct settlement between the PF and the Rhodesians in 1978, which prolonged the deadly war.

While Kissinger was making his farewell tour concerning his role in the Anglo-American negotiations, the young military leaders of ZIPA returned to Mozambique and began plans to integrate forces with ZIPRA. As Rugare Gumbo would later describe it, some in ZANLA and ZANU labelled the ZIPA leaders as “sell-outs” and created a situation where false claims were made against the ZIPA leaders. As Gumbo wrote in August 1979, “These genuine efforts of ZIPA were interpreted as efforts to usurp power or to engineer a coup.” Gumbo claims that actions were taken against the ZIPA leaders, as “reports

⁶⁸ Wilf Mhanda, *Dzino*, 160.

furnished by Tongogara and Nhongo to the Central Committee in Maputo about activities of ZIPA in the camps, especially after the return of the central committee from the Geneva conference were that there was a state of war in the camps.” Gumbo argues that these reports influenced “the central committee to take drastic measures against ZIPA.” Gumbo describes how “forty five (45) ZIPA commanders including seven (7) leading members of the military committee and famile [sic] officer were placed under custody of the Mozambiquean [sic] government in January 1977.” Gumbo adds that these arrests were “carried out unceremoniously without even charging or giving them any hearing.” This supposedly temporary removal of ZIPA Commanders became “an indefinite isolation and expulsion.”⁶⁹ When Gumbo wrote this in 1979, the ZIPA leaders had been in jail since January 1977, and he and other ZANU leaders had been held since January 1978. His arrest, and further consolidation of power by Mugabe and his allies in the military command of ZANLA is described in the following chapters.

Just a month before the arrest of the ZIPA leadership, Kissinger had joked with Ambassador Pik Botha about the nationalists post-Geneva. Kissinger asked Botha, to laughter, “Don’t you think Nkomo, Sithole, Muzorewa and Mugabe would sit down together?” Pik Botha replied, “They’ll be after each other, bribing and fighting. Kissinger replied, to more laughter, “Really? . . . Don’t they just want what is best for their people?”⁷⁰ Such jovial banter between Kissinger and Botha in December, when contrasted to what would happen in January to the ZIPA leaders who had helped legitimate Mugabe’s leadership by backing him at Geneva, demonstrates the violence inherent in Cold War diplomacy, even when the principal actors are far removed from the scene of the crime.

⁶⁹ Rugare Gumbo, “The Truth about the Recurrent ZANU Crisis and the Emergence of a two line Struggle,” letter signed, “By Detained ZANU Leaders, HIGH Command, ZIPA Military Committee, and other Senior Commanders in Mozambique” (no date; accompanying cover letter dated August 13, 1979), item 72, FCO 36/2496, BNA.

⁷⁰ Memorandum of Conversation, Washington, DC, December 24, 1976, Ambassador R. F. Botha, Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, William E. Schaufele, National Security Staff, Peter W. Rodman, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976*, vol. XXVIII, Southern Africa, 236.