

MEMO

APRIL 18, 1979

TO: PAUL
FROM: CHRIS C.

SUBJECT: RHODESIA ELECTIONS

1. Background Update

White electorate elections took place April 10 for 20 seats in new Parliament
Black electorate elections began on April 17 and will continue through the 23
Reports of the first day's turnout are 20% of the 2.8 million black voters
Guerilla disruption of the elections has been minor - a few buses were
sabotaged, about 5 polling places were bombed, a fuel storage facility
was damaged.

General flavor of the press and observers on the scene is from favorable to
uncommitted on the question of fairness and legitimacy of the elections.

On April 13, Rhodesian commandos raided Lusaka, Zambia and destroyed Joshua
Nkomo's home and two other guerilla organization structures in Lusaka.

The commandos drove into Zambia in Landrovers and returned the same way.

It appears that South Africa has decided to intervene more openly and decisively
in Rhodesia as evidenced by sending of transport planes and helicopters
to Rhodesia. There is talk in the press here of a "new" South African
strategy of creating a bulwark of anti-communist states in southern Africa.
This would explain the apparent intention of S.A. to bow out of the
UN plan for Namibia and the apparent intention of S.A. to help Rhodesia
win the war.

2. Policy Issues

Legitimacy of elections - The Rhodesian tactic is to create a high turn-out
of black voters in this election. They will present a high poll (perhaps
60%) as evidence of black preference for the new constitution and
support for the new "majority rule" government. They have mobilized
nearly every healthy white male to serve in the security forces during
the election. They intend to thwart Guerilla disruption and so far have
largely succeeded. 70 observers and 30 press correspondents are on the
scene to report on the fairness of the elections. One Rhodesian told
a reporter: "Look, its simple. The total number of Africans employed
in this country is 908,000. If you roughly double this figure just to
include wives, or one other voter in the family, you get somewhere around
1.8 million probable voters. That's around 64 percent of the total right
there."

Elections and Sanctions - In your floor statements on the observer issue
you stated that the elections would not satisfy the terms of the Case-
Javits amendment, which is to say that Rhodesia had already announced
that the elections would not be open to the participation of all
political groups. But, in light of what may well be Ian Smith's most
masterful stroke yet, these elections may come off as a triumph for
the Salisbury regime. They may well be seen as fair, and the high poll
will establish popular support. If you say now that these elections
are a travesty, you well might face some contradictions in the short term.
It might be better to withhold judgement on how the elections are
conducted and instead focus on other issues such as:

a) the wisdom of waiting for President Carter's determination in
late May or early June (once the new government is installed) concerning
the elections and sanctions, as Case Javits provides.

b) the security situation - once the emergency mobilization of security forces is ended after the elections, the military force will return to half its present level of nearly 70,000 men. The war will then revert to its former pattern of guerilla sabotage and ambush designed to break white will and force large scale emigration. If the guerillas fail now to halt or disrupt the election, they will no doubt intensify the war once the security forces are halved. If the United States lifts sanctions in the short term, during this apparent honeymoon for the Salisbury regime, we will buy a deception. As soon as we find ourselves linked up with Smith and Muzorewa, the war will return to its original agony and we will be on the wrong side again.

c) the constitution - you may wish to argue that election will not alter the document on which they are based. Black support for this government may decrease when they witness how the government is set up, who is still holding the major positions of power, and how little things have changed. Time is against this government just as it was against Smith's regime.

NOTE: The State Dept. informs me that if a sanctions vote comes up before the President makes his formal determination on the issue in late May or early June, then the President will oppose the lifting of sanctions because it violates Case-Javits.

Possible vehicles for the lifting of sanctions by Congress are the DOD Supplemental Authorization due on the floor of the Senate within the next two weeks or any one of the foreign assistance bills due on the Senate floor in late May or early June.