



*Rime Minister*

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

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*They got it wrong - principally I think in giving publicity to their representations, which makes it look as though we were just acting for effect, the me-too syndrome.*

*Agree that I should reply: (a) the representations made run counter to, indeed endanger, the efforts you're making to influence*

Dear Charles,

Representations to the South African Government

You enquired about the background to the representations which Sir Patrick Moberly made to the South African Government on 25 February and to which the South Africans have now responded publicly. The Foreign Secretary has been in his constituency all day and has not had an opportunity to see this letter. I am submitting it to him in parallel.

The representations were made on a number of recent internal developments in South Africa which run contrary to the South African Government's commitment to reform and to creating the climate for dialogue in that country.

These developments were:

- the violence in Alexandra where the security forces sealed the township and shot at least 20 blacks dead in recent unrest (the South African Council of Churches claims that the total dead is very much higher). The violent reaction by the authorities has caused widespread international concern.
- the recent announcement that the homeland of KwaNdebele would be made "independent" at the end of this year. This is a clear step backwards towards a policy of "Grand Apartheid".
- the forced incorporation of the area of Moutse into KwaNdebele prior to its independence in clear opposition to the wishes of the area's inhabitants. Mrs Suzman had expressed particular concern to us about this development. In a related incident families were moved from the township of Uitvlucht to the homeland of Lebowa. There were reports that some of these removals were forced though the South African authorities have claimed that all were voluntary.
- the detention without trial in the independent homeland of Venda of six members of the UDF-oriented Northern Transvaal Action Committee. These detentions took place shortly after the six had

*(b) the timing was lousy; (c) in future they should consult of this sort with No-10 before acting.*

*CDD 20/2  
Yes  
not*

/met

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met a member of our Embassy staff on the introduction of the Lutheran Dean of Venda who subsequently expressed concern to the Embassy about their detention.

- the case of the "Sharpeville Six" who have recently been sentenced to death in a treason trial in which the defence alleged, with supporting medical opinion, that some of the defendants had been tortured to extract evidence from them. We have had considerable correspondence from MPs on both sides of the House about this case.

A demarche was prepared on these subjects in close consultation with our Ambassador. Sir Patrick Moberly saw the South African Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr Miller, and spoke as instructed. I enclose a copy of his reporting telegram and of the public statement which the Embassy subsequently issued, after clearing it with the FCO.

The South African Government has made two public statements about the representations

- i) a statement by Mr Miller of which we so far have only the Reuter's account;
- ii) a statement by the Minister of Law and Order, Mr Le Grange, which was featured prominently on the BBC's Today programme this morning. The Reuter's account of this is also attached.

The Foreign Secretary accepts that it is difficult to strike a balance between being active in supporting our well-known position on apartheid, and at the same time not sacrificing the important degree of influence which we have with the South African Government, and in particular the Prime Minister's influence with President Botha. He is very conscious also of the need not to be associated in the minds of the South African Government with the knee-jerk critics who make public statements at regular intervals. It is true that the incidents on which the representations were made in this case were of the kind on which we have made representations in the past, and that the South African Government has over-reacted to the representations, no doubt for reasons of its own. Nevertheless, the Foreign Secretary is concerned about the possible implications of a public dispute with the South African Government at a delicate moment in the

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preparations for the visit of the Commonwealth Group. He believes that our aim must now be to lower the temperature. The Foreign Secretary will review the situation after the weekend to see whether we need to take any further action in this direction.

*Yours ever,  
Len Appleyard*

(L V Appleyard)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street

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