



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

16 June, 1986.

SOUTH AFRICA: MOTION

You showed me a copy of the Opposition's Motion for Tuesday's debate.

I enclose a draft amendment which I think - subject to confirmation in the light of any comments which the Foreign Secretary and the Chief Whip may have - the Prime Minister would accept.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office).

(C.D. Powell)

A.C. Galsworthy, Esq., CMG,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

20 20

SOUTH AFRICA

That this House calls upon Her Majesty's Government, in view of the worsening situation in the Republic of South Africa and in the light of the Report of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group, to work actively with the European Community, the Commonwealth, and the Economic Summit seven countries for effective measures which will help achieve a peaceful solution in South Africa based on negotiations and a suspension of violence on all sides.

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

17 June 1986

Dear Charles,

South Africa Debate

I enclose a copy of the latest version of the Foreign Secretary's speech for the Debate. It is still being worked on here, and will probably be subject to considerable * revision.

Yours ever,

(Tony Galsworthy)

C D Powell Esq.
PS/No 10 Downing St

* I hope not
much more!
C D Powell

D R A F T

FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEBATE: TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 1986:
SECRETARY OF STATE'S SPEECH ON SOUTH AFRICA

Rt Hon Gentlemen's characteristically simplistic opening to
debate.

If problem as easy to solve as he suggests, would
have been solved long since.

[As the Prime Minister told
this House on 12 June
"Of course, we want a more
just and equitable society
in South Africa and we
condemn apartheid".]

But able to start debate at least from one important piece
of common ground. For I join him by expressing, on behalf of
HMG, our total and absolute condemnation of apartheid.

Have visited South Africa only once: almost ten and a half
years ago.

That visit included a visit to Soweto, under guidance of one of black community leaders.

Our official hosts had not found it possible to fit such a visit into our programme. We had entered the township without a pass, without leave.

So whenever we saw a South Africa police vehicle, and their presence was not inconspicuous, we had to turn quickly out of sight.

Our guide felt, and had to behave, as though she was - in the graphic phrase of Eminent Persons Group:

"an alien in her own country".

We forecast with unhappy precision almost exactly the tragic explosion of violence that occurred a few months later ten years ago.

Such incidents inevitable in a society that has institutionalised the denial of human rights, that has done so, and continues to do so, explicitly on racial grounds.

That is the vice of apartheid.

President Botha described apartheid in January as "outmoded".

No phrase could have been more revealing.

For rest of world such institutionalised discrimination has never been acceptable.

Apartheid casts a heavy shadow not only over South Africa but over whole region.

It is the defence of this indefensible system that has led South Africa into conflict with her neighbours.

And for people of this country, for successive governments, the problem of South Africa, the impact of apartheid, has for decades been a cause of profound and growing anxiety.

We have major economic interests in South Africa, of course.

Totally ignored by RHG. Taken no account either of extent to which British capital, British skills, British people have contributed much to its economic vitality. In considering measures we should adopt to promote change in South Africa, quite wrong to overlook fact that up to one hundred and twenty thousand jobs in this country still depend directly on trade with South Africa.

Quote from Rowlands:

"Economic sanctions would have grave consequences for ordinary people here and throughout South Africa. We want to use our links with the Republic to promote peaceful change while there is still time." (Hansard, 7th December 1977, Col. 770).

What guarantee if those jobs destroyed in Britain will not be recreated elsewhere?

There are other ties too. Estimated that there are at least two million persons of British birth and descent in South Africa, of whom eight hundred thousand or more may be entitled to claim the right of abode in this country.

All these people aspire to play a part in the development of South Africa.

Yet for all of them, for all the peoples of South Africa, that future is at risk, if it is to be dominated by armed struggle, racial conflict and bloodshed.

And much more than their future will be at risk, if the South Africa that eventually emerges from such conflict sees itself as having done so in face of opposition from Britain, or the West.

Against that background my RHF the PM and I have repeatedly made plain the objectives of our policy towards South Africa:

- we wish to see apartheid brought to an end, at the earliest possible date.

- and we wish to see established in its place a non-racial society
with democratic, representative government
and with proper safeguards for all minorities.

✓ That can be the only secure foundation of a prosperous South Africa, living in harmony with its neighbours.

And we wish to see these changes brought about peacefully,
without violence,
by dialogue and reform,
not by revolution.

✓ It would not help in any way to promote change of that kind if we were to implement policies that would:

- ruin the South African economy;
- risk economic ruin for South Africa's neighbours;
- fuel an explosion of mounting racial strife and tribal violence;
- with possibly grave consequences for racial tolerance throughout the world.

It is precisely to avoid such consequences that we have for so long concerned ourselves with the future of South Africa.

It is wrong to see the question of "sanctions" - to use that hard-worked, over-simplified word - as though it is one that has arisen today, this year, last year, for the first time.

Successive British governments have for years been taking measures to hasten the process of peaceful change in South Africa.

And those measures have helped to make the case for change in South Africa. So too, quite clearly, has the mounting pressure of events in South Africa itself.

Likewise, of course, the growing economic pressures of the world outside. Increasingly the judgement of world capital markets has been bringing home to South Africa the urgency of the need for change.

✓ And important changes have been made. [RHG only too willing to brush them aside.] It is only right that we should acknowledge them.

We have seen:

- fundamental reforms in labour legislation;
- the extension of freehold rights to urban blacks;
- only a few weeks ago, the introduction of a bill to reform the pass laws.
- a commitment to equal expenditure on education
- and the promise of common citizenship

The South African Government no longer try to defend the apartheid system.

They have recognised the need for fundamental reform.

They have found the courage to make a start on that task.

But they have not yet found the final courage of conviction that apartheid in all its guises must be swept away.

In the absence of that commitment the tide of violence has continued to rise.

It is a tide that reflects the anger and frustration of people, who, in words of the Report of the Eminent Persons Group, are "no longer prepared to submit to the oppression, discrimination and exploitation" of apartheid.

Still possible to assert that what is going on in South Africa is primarily a matter of law and order. But that is to miss the real issues.

Of course, we have to recognise that there is an internal security problem in South Africa.

No-one who learned of the Durban bomb explosion on Saturday or who has heard of the appalling so-called necklace killings or of other incidents of brutality in the townships can fail to have been chilled by what is happening.

We cannot, and must not, turn a blind eye to that.

Such action will not bring justice in South Africa one day nearer.

But, as the Eminent Persons Group Report rightly says, violence is firmly rooted in the apartheid system.

Treating the diverse forms of violence only as a security problem, without tackling the underlying cause of the problem, can only make things worse.

The Commonwealth approach particularly was combined with a political initiative. The establishment of the EPG, that was a farsighted endeavour to break the impasse and end the cycle of violence. It could never have been put in place without the energetic support of by RHF the PM.

The Commonwealth Group initiative showed what the breadth of expertise and experience the Commonwealth can offer.

This initiative attracted growing support not only from the Commonwealth, but also from the rest of the world.

It is that underlying problem, the nature of the system itself, that stands in need of change. And change by means of dialogue, in the context of a suspension of violence on all sides.

It was for that purpose that the international community last autumn decided to put in place a series of additional measures designed to hasten process of change: the United States Congress on 9 September, the European Community countries at Luxembourg on 10 September. And finally the Commonwealth at Nassau on 20 October.

In none of these cases was the approach based solely on taking measures against South Africa.

The Group was set a specific task by the Commonwealth Heads of Government: to encourage the process of peaceful political dialogue in South Africa in the context of a suspension of violence on all sides.

The Commonwealth called upon the South African Government to take a number of specific steps:
to declare that the system of apartheid would be dismantled
and to set out what specific actions it would take to achieve that end:

- to terminate the state of emergency:
- to release immediately and unconditionally Nelson Mandela and all others imprisoned or detained for their opposition to apartheid:
- to establish political freedom,
in particular by lifting the ban on the ANC and other political parties.

The Group were able to make much more progress than many expected.

They were able to overcome the initial climate of suspicion and distrust. They offered the South African Government an unprecedented opportunity to break out of the vicious circle of violence.

To our very great regret, the South African Government has so far declined that opportunity. The way ahead is thus much more difficult.

But even if the Group did not secure the desired breakthrough, they have charted a course for the negotiations that must eventually take place and identified many of the obstacles ahead.

Their mission would have been worthwhile for that alone.

We all owe the Eminent Persons Group a debt of gratitude for the dedication and effort they brought to their task.

Whatever our standpoint, we must ensure that the contribution they have made is not wasted. In the end - sooner rather than later, we must all hope - dialogue and peaceful negotiations are the only way forward.

If the task is harder today than it was six months ago - and it certainly is - the objectives must surely remain the same as those defined at Nassau.

Two propositions stand out with ever greater clarity today.

First, it becomes increasingly clear that in the long run the forces of law and order will only be able to maintain the peace, if their authority is clearly founded upon the consent of all the races of South Africa.

And second, it is also increasingly clear that the key to the commencement of dialogue is the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela. That must be seen as the major act of reconciliation that is necessary to pave the way for peace.

It is to secure swift progress in that direction that we need effective and co-ordinated international action. As my Rt Honorable Friend the Prime Minister said on 13 June, "We have to consider what would be the measures that would be most likely to bring about the change we all wish to see, which is the end of apartheid and the black people of South Africa having rights which they do not have now, rights to take part in the democratic process of the country."

The RHG has argued that only the imposition of sweeping measures aimed directly at the South African economy can force progress.

All experience teaches us that such measures are most unlikely to be effectively enforced worldwide.

And if they ever were, their effect would be almost entirely negative.

No-one should under-estimate the length of time for which resistance, within the resulting siege economy, could be maintained.

Meanwhile, there would be severe and long-term consequences for the whole of Southern Africa.

This is the basis on which Her Majesty's Government is now considering in consultation with the international community what measures should be put in place. Let me tell the House the principles we should have in mind as we consider that question.

If they are to be effective any steps we take must be directed not at the destruction of the South African economy but at influencing opinion in South Africa firmly in the direction of reform.

If they are to be effective, any steps we take must give the South African Government the incentive to respond positively rather than the excuse to retreat further into isolation.

If they are to be effective, any steps we take should be designed to persuade the South African Government, with the support of the South African business community, to take up the agenda of reform.

And if they are to be effective, any steps we take should above all be introduced with the fullest international support.

Without this any action would be an empty gesture.

Like the governments of almost every other country, we are carefully considering all the conclusions and implications of the Eminent Persons Group Report.

As my Rt Honourable Friend the Prime Minister told the House last Thursday, we shall now be in touch with "our Commonwealth partners, our European partners and our economic summit partners to discuss this report". As the House knows, the seven Commonwealth Heads of Government appointed at Nassau, including my Rt Honourable Friend the Prime Minister, will be meeting in London in early August.

Meanwhile we are in touch with governments of the Summit Seven. Within Europe consultations have already begun. At yesterday's meeting of the Community's Foreign Affairs Council in Luxembourg, we had a preliminary exchange of views - and commissioned an urgent report from our Political Directors.

We shall be taking a leading part in these discussions.