

CCPC (7)



Prime Minister.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

This is the Foreign Secretary's game plan. A visit in several stages, with the first one next week and the second just before the Commonwealth Meeting. He will go to Zambia & Zimbabwe as well. He may ask to meet Tambo later, wearing his EC hat. He would like a VC 10.

Dear Charles, Zimbabwe as well. He may ask to meet Tambo later, wearing his EC hat. He would like a VC 10.

Mission to Southern Africa

The Foreign Secretary has been giving urgent thought to his mission to Southern Africa. His views are as follows:

Strategy

The mandate from the European Council for the visit flows from the statement in The Hague Communique of 27 June that the commencement without delay of a national dialogue is essential to halt further escalation of violence and allow negotiations in South Africa, and that such dialogue cannot take place so long as recognised leaders of the black community are detained and their organisations are proscribed. The release of Nelson Mandela is specifically urged. The Community asks Sir Geoffrey Howe to visit Southern Africa "in a further effort to establish conditions in which the necessary dialogue can commence".

Agree?
CDP
1/7

Sir Geoffrey Howe considers it essential that we should be seen from the outset to be engaged on a purposeful diplomatic initiative. We must refute all criticism that the mission is a delaying tactic or that it merely duplicates the work already done by the European Troika and the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group. We should emphasise that it is not a fact finding mission. The aim is to persuade the key parties, in particular the South African Government, to make concrete progress towards the European and Commonwealth objectives of dialogue and the suspension of violence. The European Council's agreement and the intention to bring other major industrialized countries on board gives a major new strength to the process.

We shall stand a greater chance of convincing Commonwealth leaders and black South Africans of our sincerity if Sir Geoffrey is seen to start his mission as soon as possible. An early first visit would also allow time for further visits and contacts in which the net could be spread wider and any opening that he achieves exploited. Also, to have a reasonable chance of success it will be essential, to begin with at least, that talks with the South African Government and other key leaders should be kept as confidential as possible. This was the key to the Commonwealth Group's initiative getting as far as it did.

/Timing



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Timing/Itinerary - two stage approach

The Foreign Secretary therefore intends to begin his mission with a short first visit to the area next week which would be aimed at establishing what flexibility there may be on the South African Government's position. Pik Botha has given a very qualified public reaction to the European Council Statement; we can expect an early reply from President Botha to the Prime Minister's message. That may itself indicate what, if any, flexibility there is. His point of departure will be the COMGEP "negotiating concept" and the South African Government's replies to this, the last of which was never followed up by the Group. But it will also be essential to engage the Commonwealth Front Line States and black South African leaders. In order to do this, he will fly first to Lusaka to meet President Kaunda and explain our objectives to him. The Foreign Secretary will then go on to South Africa. In South Africa he intends to see Pik Botha (probably in Pretoria), P W Botha (possibly in the Cape) and Nelson Mandela (Cape Town). He will not attempt on the first visit to see other South African spokesmen, black or white. He may return via Harare, to brief Mr Mugabe, whose chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Summit at the end of August gives him scope for considerable damage if we do not carry him with us.

The Foreign Secretary intends to keep fully confidential the content of his discussions during this first visit. The precedent of the Commonwealth initiative suggests that this practice can be helpful in generating confidence, especially on the part of the SAG. After the first visit, there will be an opportunity to take stock in London and to work out proposals for a slightly more extensive second visit to Southern Africa shortly before the Commonwealth review meeting. During this second visit Sir Geoffrey intends to have a wider range of meetings. In order for the mission to carry credibility with the Front Line States and black South Africans generally such meetings would have to include one with the ANC which would mean Sir Geoffrey seeing Tambo, as a logical follow-up from his meeting with Nelson Mandela. This would of course be in his EC Presidency capacity. Such a meeting would be important not just for its intrinsic value but because it would make contacts in South Africa much easier, with eg Bishop Tutu, Mrs Mandela and UDF leaders, some of whom have already indicated that they would refuse to talk to Sir Geoffrey. The Foreign Secretary intends if necessary to enlist the support of President Kaunda in approaching Tambo.

Dates

Sir Geoffrey plans to undertake the first visit between 9-13 July (he will be addressing the European Parliament on 8 July and would need to be back for Shevardnadze's visit here on 14/15 July). The second visit could take place between 23-30 July. He would like to have the services of an RAF VC10.

/Consultation

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Consultation

The first step is to confirm that the South African Government agree to the visit and to get Kaunda's and Mugabe's agreement to Sir Geoffrey visiting Lusaka and Harare. We intend to approach the South African Embassy formally this afternoon. It will be particularly important to turn around Kaunda from his initial opposition to the mission. The Prime Minister has already written to him (as well as to other key Commonwealth leaders) and the Secretary of State will telephone President Kaunda to follow this up. We shall also need to keep our Community Partners closely informed and to enlist their active support. The Foreign Secretary spoke to a number of his EC colleagues during the EUREKA meeting yesterday. He notes that the Germans, Belgians, French and Portuguese all have contacts who could be useful either with the South Africans or with the black African states. We are also keeping in touch with the Americans and the Japanese. For instance we are suggesting that Crocker should come here shortly for a meeting with FCO officials (it will not be helpful to our efforts if Congressional pressures lead President Reagan to take new steps during the period of Sir Geoffrey's visits).

I am copying this letter to Michael Stark (Cabinet Office) as well as to John Howe (Ministry of Defence) in view of the request for the use of the VC10.

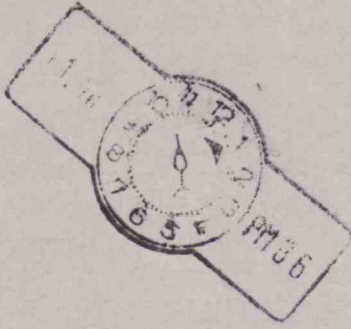
Yours ever,

Colin Budd

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Private Secretary

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From the Private Secretary

2 July, 1986.

Thank you for your letter of 1 July setting out the Foreign Secretary's views on the conduct of his mission to South Africa. I believe the Prime Minister will be content with what is proposed. She and the Foreign Secretary will, of course, have an opportunity to discuss it at their regular bilateral tomorrow.

I am sure that the Prime Minister would agree that the Foreign Secretary should have the services of an RAF VC10.

I am sending copies of this letter to John Howe (Ministry of Defence) and Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

(C.D. Powell)

C.R. Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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