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10 DOWNING STREET

SUBJECT

THE PRIME MINISTER

4 July 1986

cc Master
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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL NO. T125/86

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for the message which your Embassy conveyed to my office on 2 July.

I am sorry that you do not accept that the overall thrust and intention of the conclusions of the European Council meeting at The Hague last week were positive. They were certainly intended to be so. Since that meeting I have publicly and repeatedly made clear that the Council decision should not be seen as an ultimatum. I have said explicitly that we do not think that threatening further sanctions immediately or automatically would help to bring about the negotiations that we all want.

I have also told the House of Commons repeatedly of my opposition to comprehensive sanctions and my conviction that your problems have to be solved by negotiation. I reiterated our view that it is not for us or for anyone else outside South Africa to say what arrangements would come out of such negotiations. It will be for all the people of South Africa to decide on the future constitution they would like.

So far as the British Government are concerned, there does indeed need to be a suspension of violence on all sides, as called for by Commonwealth Heads of Government at Nassau. I certainly do not see you as being required to make a unilateral concession. It remains my view that a commitment

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to the early release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC, in exchange for a suspension of violence, would do more than any other step to create the climate of confidence in which a dialogue would become possible.

This brings me to your question about what is meant by "authentic leaders" of the black population. Of course, it is hard to be sure until, as you promised in your speech of 31 January, all South Africans are in a position where they can participate in government through their elected representatives. But I can assure you that we, like others, do not have only the ANC in mind (though they clearly have a sizeable following).

There is much else to discuss in your letter. But I think that it would be best if Geoffrey Howe were able to go over the ground with you in person at the earliest possible opportunity. His aim would be to see in what ways we might be able to help the process of negotiation. Of course I accept your commitment to power-sharing and to a democratic system of government which accommodates all legitimate political aspirations of all the South African communities. The challenge is how to draw in those groups who have hitherto been unwilling to associate themselves with the plans and structures of the South African Government.

I now hear that it is unlikely to be convenient for you to receive Geoffrey Howe next week as we had proposed. This perturbs me considerably. I can well understand that it is not easy to accommodate such a visit at short notice. But it was not through any wish to inconvenience you that we suggested it. It is my honest assessment that an early visit, during which Geoffrey Howe would meet with you, will best enable me to defend what I perceive to be your interests as much as ours in the face of the rapidly mounting pressures for action against South Africa.

Could I ask you to be kind enough to look again at the possibility of a visit by Geoffrey Howe next week, and of seeing him yourself? I can assure you that he would act with the greatest possible discretion. I would not come back to you on this unless I really believed it a matter of great importance.

Yours sincerely

Rajandhar

The Honourable P. W. Botha, D.M.S.

SUBJECT

Subject on S. AFRICA Relations Pt. 11

(43)

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PRIME MINISTER'S TOP COPY
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. 125/86
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RECEIVED IN REGISTRY
- 2 JUL 1986

INDEX	REGISTRY
	Action Taken

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TO FLASH PRETORIA
TELNO 106
OF 041900Z JULY 1986

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO PRESIDENT BOTHA

1. IN THE INTERESTS OF SPEED WE HAVE PASSED THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE THROUGH THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY.

BEGINS

THANK YOU FOR THE MESSAGE WHICH YOUR EMBASSY CONVEYED TO MY OFFICE ON 2 JULY.

I AM SORRY THAT YOU DO NOT ACCEPT THAT THE OVERALL THRUST AND INTENTION OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL MEETING AT THE HAGUE LAST WEEK WERE POSITIVE. THEY WERE CERTAINLY INTENDED TO BE SO. SINCE THAT MEETING I HAVE PUBLICLY AND REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR THAT THE COUNCIL DECISION SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS AN ULTIMATUM. I HAVE SAID EXPLICITLY THAT WE DO NOT THINK THAT THREATENING FURTHER SANCTIONS IMMEDIATELY OR AUTOMATICALLY WOULD HELP TO BRING ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS THAT WE ALL WANT.

I HAVE ALSO TOLD THE HOUSE OF COMMONS REPEATEDLY OF MY OPPOSITION TO COMPREHENSIVE SANCTIONS AND MY CONVICTION THAT YOUR PROBLEMS HAVE TO BE SOLVED BY NEGOTIATION. I REITERATED OUR VIEW THAT IT IS NOT FOR US OR FOR ANYONE ELSE OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA TO SAY WHAT ARRANGEMENTS WOULD COME OUT OF SUCH NEGOTIATIONS. IT

WILL BE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA TO DECIDE ON THE FUTURE CONSTITUTION THEY WOULD LIKE.

SO FAR AS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ARE CONCERNED, THERE DOES INDEED NEED TO BE A SUSPENSION OF VIOLENCE ON ALL SIDES, AS CALLED FOR BY COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT AT NASSAU. I CERTAINLY DO NOT SEE YOU AS BEING REQUIRED TO MAKE A UNILATERAL CONCESSION. IT REMAINS MY VIEW THAT A COMMITMENT TO THE EARLY RELEASE OF NELSON MANDELA AND THE UNBANNING OF THE ANC, IN EXCHANGE FOR A SUSPENSION OF VIOLENCE, WOULD DO MORE THAN ANY OTHER STEP TO CREATE THE CLIMATE OF CONFIDENCE IN WHICH A DIALOGUE WOULD BECOME POSSIBLE.

THIS BRINGS ME TO YOUR QUESTION ABOUT WHAT IS MEANT BY QUOTE AUTHENTIC LEADERS UNQUOTE OF THE BLACK POPULATION. OF COURSE, IT IS HARD TO BE SURE UNTIL, AS YOU PROMISED IN YOUR SPEECH OF 31 JANUARY, ALL SOUTH AFRICANS ARE IN A POSITION WHERE THEY CAN PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT THROUGH THEIR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES. BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT WE, LIKE OTHERS, DO NOT HAVE ONLY THE ANC IN MIND (THOUGH THEY CLEARLY HAVE A SIZEABLE FOLLOWING).

THERE IS MUCH ELSE TO DISCUSS IN YOUR LETTER. BUT I THINK THAT IT WOULD BE BEST IF GEOFFREY HOWE WERE ABLE TO GO OVER THE GROUND WITH YOU IN PERSON AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY. HIS AIM WOULD BE TO SEE IN WHAT WAYS WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION. OF COURSE I ACCEPT YOUR COMMITMENT TO POWER-SHARING AND TO A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT WHICH ACCOMMODATES ALL LEGITIMATE POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS OF ALL THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITIES. THE CHALLENGE IS HOW TO DRAW IN THOSE GROUPS WHO HAVE HITHERTO BEEN UNWILLING TO ASSOCIATE THEMSELVES WITH THE PLANS AND STRUCTURES OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT.

I NOW HEAR THAT IT IS UNLIKELY TO BE CONVENIENT FOR YOU TO RECEIVE GEOFFREY HOWE NEXT WEEK AS WE HAD PROPOSED. THIS PERTURBS ME CONSIDERABLY. I CAN WELL UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS NOT EASY TO ACCOMMODATE SUCH A VISIT AT SHORT NOTICE. BUT IT WAS NOT THROUGH ANY WISH TO INCONVENIENCE YOU THAT WE SUGGESTED IT. IT IS MY

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HONEST ASSESSMENT THAT AN EARLY VISIT, DURING WHICH GEOFFREY HOWE WOULD MEET WITH YOU, WILL BEST ENABLE ME TO DEFEND WHAT I PERCEIVE TO BE YOUR INTERESTS AS MUCH AS OURS IN THE FACE OF THE RAPIDLY MOUNTING PRESSURES FOR ACTION AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA.

COULD I ASK YOU TO BE KIND ENOUGH TO LOOK AGAIN AT THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT BY GEOFFREY HOWE NEXT WEEK, AND OF SEEING HIM YOURSELF? I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT HE WOULD ACT WITH THE GREATEST POSSIBLE DISCRETION. I WOULD NOT COME BACK TO YOU ON THIS UNLESS I REALLY BELIEVED IT A MATTER OF GREAT IMPORTANCE.

ENDS

HOWE

OCMIAN 7969

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MAIN

LIMITED

HEAD SAFD

PS

PS/MRS CHALKER

PS/PUS

MR E FERGUSSON

MR REEVE

File

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to



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

4 July, 1986.

**SOUTH AFRICA
REPLY TO PRESIDENT BOTHA'S MESSAGE**

You sent me earlier today a draft reply to President Botha's recent message to the Prime Minister. I enclose a version which has been approved by the Prime Minister, and would be grateful if the text could be telegraphed to Cape Town for delivery as soon as possible tomorrow.

BI=

(C.D. Powell)

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

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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Thank you for the message which your Embassy conveyed to my office on 2 July.

I am sorry that you do not accept that the overall thrust and intention of the conclusions of the European Council meeting at The Hague last week were positive. They were certainly intended to be so. Since that meeting I have publicly and repeatedly made clear that the Council decision should not be seen as an ultimatum. I have said explicitly that we do not think that threatening further sanctions immediately or automatically would help to bring about the negotiations that we all want.

I have also told the House of Commons repeatedly of my opposition to comprehensive sanctions and my conviction that your problems have to be solved by negotiation. I reiterated our view that it is not for us or for anyone else outside South Africa to say what arrangements would come out of such negotiations. It will be for all the people of South Africa to decide on the future constitution they would like.

So far as the British Government are concerned, there does indeed need to be a suspension of violence on all sides, as called for by Commonwealth Heads of Government at Nassau. I certainly do not see you as being required to make a unilateral concession. It remains my view that a commitment

to the early release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC, in exchange for a suspension of violence, would do more than any other step to create the climate of confidence in which a dialogue would become possible.

This brings me to your question about what is meant by "authentic leaders" of the black population. Of course, it is hard to be sure until, as you promised in your speech of 31 January, all South Africans are in a position where they can participate in government through their elected representatives. But I can assure you that we, like others, do not have only the ANC in mind (though they clearly have a sizeable following).

There is much else to discuss in your letter. But I think that it would be best if Geoffrey Howe were able to go over the ground with you in person at the earliest possible opportunity. His aim would be to see in what ways we might be able to help the process of negotiation. Of course I accept your commitment to power-sharing and to a democratic system of government which accommodates all legitimate political aspirations of all the South African communities. The challenge is how to draw in those groups who have hitherto been unwilling to associate themselves with the plans and structures of the South African Government.

I now hear that it is unlikely to be convenient for you to receive Geoffrey Howe next week as we had proposed. This perturbs me considerably. I can well understand that it is not easy to accommodate such a visit at short notice. But it was not through any wish to inconvenience you that we suggested it. It is my honest assessment that an early visit, during which Geoffrey Howe would meet with you, will best enable me to defend what I perceive to be your interests as much as ours in the face of the rapidly mounting pressures for action against South Africa.

Could I ask you to be kind enough to look again at the possibility of a visit by Geoffrey Howe next week, and of seeing him yourself? I can assure you that he would act with the greatest possible discretion. I would not come back to you on this unless I really believed it a matter of great importance.

The Honourable P. W. Botha, D.M.S.

PRIME MINISTER

SOUTH AFRICA

P. W. Botha is being difficult about seeing the Foreign Secretary next week.

The Foreign Secretary would like you to weigh in by sending Botha a reply to his recent message, tonight if possible, and urging him most strongly to receive the mission next week.

I have some misgivings about your having to ask favours of Botha at this early stage, when you will certainly need to do so later. But if we don't get the whole exercise off to a good start, there won't be a later.

I have rewritten the FCO draft quite extensively. Agree to send it?

CDP

CDP

4 July 1986

phoned CDP 4h
MS

Already despatched
to CDP. It is
a confirmatory copy
CDP

SECRET



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 July 1986

Dear Charles,

South Africa: Message from P W Botha to the
Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 2 July enclosing the text of a message from State President Botha to the Prime Minister.

Meanwhile, difficulties have arisen over the Foreign Secretary's plans to pay a short visit to the area next week, from 8-12 July (with a more extensive one during the period 23-30 July). The South Africans have told us that on present plans P W Botha will not be available during the period of the Secretary of State's visit. This was confirmed, as a firm decision at the highest level, following numerous exchanges yesterday evening, when the South African Ambassador saw Sir Geoffrey Howe at breakfast this morning. Moreover, the State President's latest message to the Prime Minister indicates that he will not take a decision on whether to allow Sir Geoffrey to visit Mr Nelson Mandela until after he, and possibly some other Ministers, have met the Foreign Secretary.

We understand that the State President does have genuine diary problems.

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

As the Prime Minister knows, the Foreign Secretary attaches importance to being able to fit in two visits to this area this month. A single journey, particularly with the South Africans in their present mulish mood, risks being presented by the media, and therefore to our Commonwealth partners, as a "make or break" occasion. Moreover, there would be more chance of such groups as

/the ANC

SECRET



the ANC and UDF agreeing to a meeting if a certain amount of first hand softening up had first been done on President Kaunda. Sir Geoffrey sees the first visit as a mainly exploratory opportunity to seek to establish what scope exists for movement on the part of the SAG. It would be followed by a more extensive journey from 23 to 30 July during which he would hope to follow up whatever leads present themselves and also to have contact with a range of black African leaders, including the ANC (from whom movement will of course also be needed if there is to be progress).

It would be very difficult for Sir Geoffrey to visit South Africa next week without seeing P W Botha (given that he would not then be seeing Mandela either). This would be seen by our EC and Commonwealth partners - and presented by the media and Opposition - as a resounding snub. In the light of the firm South African reaction reported by the Ambassador, the Foreign Secretary thinks it essential that the Prime Minister should send an immediate reply to P W Botha's latest message which seeks to focus the State President on Sir Geoffrey's mission. There is no point in taking issue with those elements in it with which we do not agree or debating the issues in the terms set by the State President. This is best left for a face-to-face meeting, when Sir Geoffrey sees P W Botha.

/ The enclosed draft reply to State President Botha has been drafted with these considerations in mind.

/ At the urging of Dr Worrall, the Foreign Secretary yesterday sent a message to Pik Botha (copy enclosed), the reaction to which has been covered above.

I am copying this letter and enclosures to Michael Stark, Cabinet Office.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

DSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teletype/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

THE PRIME MINISTER

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

THE HONOURABLE PRESIDENT BOTHA DMS

Copies to:

JAIKAF

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you for the message which your Embassy conveyed to my office on 2 July.

CAVEAT.....

I am sorry that you ^{do not} ~~are unable to~~ accept that the overall thrust and intention of the conclusions of the European Council meeting at The Hague last week were positive. I myself am still convinced that they are. In particular, I have repeatedly made clear in public, ^(since the meeting I have) ~~repeatedly~~ for example during the statement I made in the House of Commons on 1 July, that the Council decision should not be seen as an ultimatum. ~~The measures outlined in the~~ ^{have} ~~communique represented contingency plans.~~ In referring to them I said explicitly that we do not think that threatening further sanctions immediately or automatically would help to bring about the negotiations that we all desire. ^{with}

~~In the course of my statement,~~ ^{have} I also told the House of Commons repeatedly of my opposition to comprehensive sanctions and my conviction that your problems have to be solved by negotiation. I reiterated our view that it is not for us or for anyone else outside South Africa to

They were certainly intended to be so. at least as far as Helmut Kohl and I were concerned, at least.

would have all done

say what arrangements would come out of such negotiations, ~~and that~~ it will be for all the people of South Africa to decide on the future constitution they would like.

So far as the British Government are concerned, there does indeed need to be a suspension of violence on all sides, as called for by Commonwealth Heads of Government at Nassau. I certainly do not see you as being required to make a unilateral concession. It remains my view, however, that ^{a commitment to} the early release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC, ^{in exchange for a commitment to} would do more than any other step ~~to help create the sort of climate of confidence in which a suspension of violence and a start on the dialogue which we all want would become possible.~~

This brings me to your question about ^{whom} ~~who~~ foreign leaders have in mind when they talk about "authentic leaders" of the black population. Of course, it is hard to be sure until, as you promised in your speech of 31 January, all South Africans are in a position where they can participate in government through their elected representatives. But I can assure you that we, like others, do not have only the ANC in mind (though they clearly have a sizeable following).

There is much else to discuss in your letter. ^{think} But I believe that it would be ^{best} immensely valuable for both of ^{us} if Geoffrey Howe ^{were} was able to go over the ground with you in person at the earliest possible opportunity. His aim would be to see in what ways we might be able to help the process of negotiation. ^{of course} I ^h accept your commitment to power-sharing and to a democratic

Suspension of violence would do more than any other step to create the climate of confidence in which a start to dialogue would become possible.

system of government which accommodates all legitimate political aspirations of all the South African communities. The challenge is how to draw in those groups who have hitherto been unwilling to associate themselves with the plans and structures of the South African Government.

I had very much hoped that Geoffrey Howe could pay a short initial visit to the area next week, from 9-11 July, and follow that up with a more extensive visit towards the end of the month, in the course of which he would want to see as representative a selection of South Africans as possible. He has been in touch with your Foreign Minister to explain the reason for the short notice, exactly why there is so little flexibility in his schedule, and why it is so important to lose no time and therefore to pay two visits rather than one in the course of this month.

I have therefore been very perturbed to hear that your Ambassador has indicated that the earlier visit would not be welcome to you. I fully understand that you have your own priorities. May I ask you, however, to put very full weight on the problems which I face in defending what I perceive to be your interests as much as ours in the face of the rapidly mounting pressures for action against South Africa.

/In

I now hear that it is unlikely to be convenient for you to receive Geoffrey Howe near well as we had proposed this perturbs me considerably I can well understand that it is not easy to accommodate such a visit at short notice. But it was not through any wish to inconvenience you that we suggested it. It is my honest opinion that we will be followed by a visit, to be during which getting there would meet with you, will be the best enable me to

I really do regard it as essential to get to London

Could I ^{ask} ~~hope~~ you to be
~~In these circumstances, while I fully~~
~~kind enough to~~
 recognise that there could be some cost to
 you, I should be particularly grateful if you
 could look again at the possibility of a visit
 by Geoffrey Howe next week, and ~~at the option~~
 of seeing him yourself. I can assure you that
 he would act with the greatest possible discretion.
~~I should not hide from you the very great~~
 disappointment which both I and my colleagues
 in the European Council would feel if there
 seemed to be undue delay in his holding discussions
 with statesmen in Southern Africa at the
 highest level from the start of his mission,
 and the difficulty there would be in managing
 the public reaction if he should not embark on
 his task promptly.

I would not come back to
 you on this ~~matter~~
unless I really believed it
 a ~~of~~ matter of great
 importance.

C. D.

MESSAGE FROM SIR GEOFFREY HOWE TO SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN MINISTER

"I understand from conversations Ewen Fergusson has had with Denis Worrall and from our Embassy's contacts in Pretoria with the DFA that although you are free to see me during my planned visit to the area next week, there are very real practical difficulties about a meeting with the State President.

I well understand the difficulties which a visit proposed at this short notice must cause you, and I am very aware of the great pressures on the State President's programme. On the other hand, the Prime Minister and her fellow Heads of State and Government at the recent European Council placed great importance on my establishing contact with statesmen in Southern Africa at the highest level. I very much share that view. I am also anxious, as I am sure you will understand, that the absence of a meeting with the State President could all too easily provoke comment that could be unhelpful to us both. I very much hope therefore that he will be able to find time for a meeting during my first visit.

I should also explain the reason why I am planning to go to the area at such short notice and why there is so little give in my dates. My aim is to pay two visits in the course of July. The first would aim to establish contact with the main policy makers in South Africa. That is why I myself attach so much importance to a meeting with the State President. This would be followed by a more extensive visit towards the end of July during which I would hope to follow up whatever leads present themselves and meet a cross-section of the various South African communities.

Unfortunately, my existing commitments are such that there are only two windows of opportunity between now and the end of the month. The first is the period 9-11 July. I must be back for the visit of the Soviet Foreign Minister who arrives here on 13 July. Another opening will not arise until after the Foreign Affairs Council on 21/22 July, which given my role as Chairman I simply cannot miss.

/We

We have not announced or confirmed any dates. But inevitably the press have a pretty fair idea of what we are proposing. This stems from their extensive knowledge of my July commitments, coupled with intelligent speculation.

I hope that I can count on you to do everything you can to try to arrange a meeting with the State President during the period 9-11 July. I would of course be willing to fly with my own aircraft (a VC10) to any part of South Africa convenient to the State President."

S. Africa

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

2 July 1986

I enclose the text of a reply to the Prime Minister's recent message from President Botha. You will wish to keep knowledge of it limited to those who need to know.

As you will see, President Botha recognises our role in avoiding punitive measures and agrees to see the Foreign Secretary. A decision on visiting Mandela, however, is to be delayed until after that meeting.

BA // The Prime Minister would like to send a prompt reply based on her remarks in the House of Commons yesterday. Particular points which she would want to make are: that the European Council conclusions are not an ultimatum: it is up to the South African people to decide their own form of government: as far as we are concerned, there has to be a suspension of violence on both sides (but we were unable to get the French to accept this at the European Council): authentic black leaders does not mean only the ANC: and that we tried to get the Tokyo Economic Summit to focus on South Africa, but were unable to overcome the resistance of others. There will no doubt be other points.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

(C. D. POWELL)

Colin Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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