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TO CABINET OFFICE 002 DESKBY 090730Z

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CONFIDENTIAL

FOLLOWING FOR PRIVATE OFFICE FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY GENERAL'S CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER.

1. WE UNDERSTAND THAT BRIEFING FOR THIS CALL WAS BEING SUBMITTED, PRESUMABLY TO MRS CHALKER ON 8 JULY. THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS ANXIOUS THAT RAMPHAL SHOULD SO FAR AS POSSIBLE BE KEPT IN PLAY IN RELATION TO HIS PRESENT MISSION TO SOUTHERN AFRICA.

2. THE SECRETARY OF STATE RECOGNISES THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL WISH TO TAKE UP WITH RAMPHAL THE EPISODE OF THE FORWARD TO THE COMGEP REPORT, AND TO URGE ON HIM THAT THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT MUST BE AND BE SEEN TO BE IMPARTIAL. IT IS SURELY WRONG THAT SOMEONE AS DISPASSIONATE AS LORD BARBER SHOULD BE ABLE TO POINT THE FINGER AT THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY GENERAL. NEVERTHELESS THE SECRETARY OF STATE HOPES THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL DO HER BEST TO URGE ON REMPHAL THE NEED FOR HIM TO PLAY A HELPFUL ROLE IN RELATION TO HIS PRESENT EFFORTS. SHE MIGHT IMPRESS ON HIM THE GREAT SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH WE APPROACH THE TASK, THE SINCERITY OF OUR BELIEF THAT THE ROAD THROUGH SANCTIONS AND CONFRONTATION IS SUCH A DESPERATE ONE THAT EVERY EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO FIND ANOTHER - QUITE POSSIBLY QUICKER - WAY FORWARD. HE COULD MAKE AN IMMENSE CONTRIBUTION BY URGING AFRICAN LEADERS IN THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE ANC TO TAKE THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S MISSION SERIOUSLY AND TO COOPERATE WITH IT.

3. GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD PASS THE ABOVE ON TO CHARLES POWELL.

HOWE

GRS 00250

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