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MEETING BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND DR G VILJOEN  
(MINISTER OF EDUCATION) IN PRETORIA AT 0800 ON 29 JULY 1986

1. Dr Viljoen said that sanctions had major implications for education policy, since they affected the economy and thus the size of the cake to be shared out: the more sanctions were imposed, the smaller would be the education budget's share of the cake. South Africa faced a high population growth rate, and a declining drop out rate from the schools: school rolls were expanding fast. The Government was taking steps to spend more money on black education, though it had faced the valid criticism during the recent Parliamentary session that as of now the majority of new money was still going to white schools. A major reason for this was that a lot of new money was going on teachers salaries: because salaries were determined by qualifications the lion's share was going to the better qualified whites. In real terms less money would be spent next year on white and Indian education than had been spent last year, but there would still not be enough for the blacks and coloureds. Sanctions would only make matters worse. South Africa faced the problems in the education field which could be found all over Africa: an education budget growing faster than GNP, and excessive population growth - together in her case with a large influx of school age children from neighbouring countries.

2. The average teacher/pupil ratio in white schools was 1:20. This was far too favourable, and needed to be brought down to 1:30. Another aim was to achieve parity of white/black salaries at the lowest teaching levels, as well as higher up the scale.

3. The Secretary of State acknowledged that important steps towards political reform had been taken. But they had not been taken with the consent of the leaders of the black majority, and as a result they were insufficient either to prevent growing black violence inside the country or international pressure for sanctions. That was why the burden of his song was that the SAG must now take the plunge, with all the risks that entailed, by releasing Mandela et al and unbanning the black political parties. The ANC must be brought into a process of peaceful dialogue. In the absence of such changes, pressure from the rest of the world would go on increasing, and there would be further measures from every quarter. The SAG had a major advantage in the current Reagan/Thatcher/Kohl combination, but that would not last forever. In the US Senate, Lugar seemed likely in any case to propose new measures before very long.

4. All sanctions were economically destructive, but they were being taken nonetheless because the SAG had not done enough to satisfy the international community; it was up to them to summon up the fresh reserves of courage that were necessary. He fully understood the SAG's worries about the ANC, which did contain some Communist elements. But the ANC did also express the basic discontent of the black nationalist. HMG would play its part by

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pressing the ANC and Kaunda et al to deliver their share of the bargain, but the key was in the attitude of the SAG.

5. Dr Viljoen said he fully appreciated the Secretary of State's basic point. However he saw two central difficulties. One was that the willingness of black leaders to enter into negotiations had been diminished by their feeling that radical change was now inevitable: they saw the SAG as being under such heavy pressure from outside that it would be bound to capitulate in the very near future. The extent of the pressure from outside was thus not making it any easier to end the impasse. Second, some way had to be found of ensuring that all black leaders had a chance to enter into negotiations. That was considered important by Buthelezi, and was indeed a very, very high priority. HMG could help in this area, by trying to bring about a situation in which genuine freedom of choice could be made possible: the circumstances in which negotiations would take place must not include intimidation and threats of violence. Moderate blacks must be allowed a voice. There must be a genuine freedom to negotiate.

6. The Secretary of State said he very much agreed. That concept had been central to the approach of the EPG, and had been accepted by Mandela, though not yet by the ANC. HMG were pushing it hard in their dialogue with the ANC.

7. A major problem was indeed that black expectations were so high. Many thought that all that was necessary was one last heave. HMG stressed to all their interlocutors the extent to which that view was quite mistaken (Dr Viljoen expressed keen appreciation). But this high level of expectations meant that it was essential for the SAG to adopt a position of leadership. At some point they must surprise the black leaders, and jolt them out of the mistrust of the SAG which was now (as a result of (a) the raids during the EPG's mission and (b) SAG policy over Namibia) very deeply ingrained.

8. Dr Viljoen said he took that point. Whatever happened in South Africa had to be the result of action taken by the SAG. There would inevitably be high risks in any initiative, but they could be reduced to more acceptable levels if the risks for moderates in taking part in the negotiating process could also be reduced, by the ANC committing themselves to non-violence. The threat of violence must be reduced, though it could not be eliminated ("I grant you that").

9. The Secretary of State pointed out that the ANC would argue that the SAG too would always have available the option of having recourse to violence. That was why there needed to be a matching commitment by the SAG. He hoped that the main focus of argument would in any event concern the substance of what was at issue, and not mere semantics.

