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Subject file
S. Africa - Relations with
- June 79 66

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FM CAPE TOWN EMBASSY 191450Z FEB 80

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TEL NO 131 OF 19 FEBRUARY

INFO PRIORITY SALISBURY

MINISTER'S

SERIAL No. T32/80

MY TEL NO 129: PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE

1. PIK BOTHA HANDED ME THIS AFTERNOON THE FOLLOWING REPLY FROM MR P W BOTHA TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE OF 14 FEBRUARY.

BEGINS:

QUOTE

DEAR PRIME MINISTER

IT IS WITH APPRECIATION THAT I HAVE NOTED YOUR EARLY AND CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSE OF 14TH FEBRUARY AS ELUCIDATED BY AMBASSADOR LEAHY. I BELIEVE THAT OUR COMMON CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET AMBITIONS AND THE THREAT THEY REPRESENT PROVIDES A SOLID BASIS FOR THE FURTHER CONSULTATIONS ENVISAGED.

WHILE I DO NOT, AS YOU KNOW, BELIEVE THAT THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN US, BASED ON THIS ASSESSMENT OF THE SOVIET DANGER, SHOULD NECESSARILY AWAIT THE RHODESIAN ELECTION, I WOULD NEVERTHELESS BE HAPPY IF THEY COULD COMMENCE IN THE SECOND HALF OF NEXT MONTH, AS YOU SUGGEST. I VIEW THE PROPOSED DISCUSSIONS AT THIS CRUCIAL TIME IN SOUTHERN AFRICA'S HISTORY OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. I ALSO AGREE THAT WE SHOULD NOT SET EXCESSIVELY AMBITIOUS GOALS AT THE OUTSET. WE MUST BEGIN WITH THE FOUNDATIONS.

I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING WHO YOUR EMISSARY WILL BE AND TO MEETING HIM OR HER IN DUE COURSE.

YOURS SINCERELY

P W BOTHA

ENDS:

2. SIGNED ORIGINAL FOLLOWS BY BAG.

3. THE ELUCIDATION REFERRED TO IN THE FIRST SENTENCE IS, OF COURSE, A REFERENCE TO MY CONVERSATIONS WITH PIK BOTHA ABOUT THE TWO POINTS MENTIONED IN MY TELEGRAMS NOS 125 AND 128. BOTHA TOLD ME, INCIDENTALLY, THAT MR P W BOTHA HAD QUERIED THESE TWO SAME POINTS WHEN HE WAS SHOWN THE PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER. [COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST] LEAHY

FILES
SAFD
OADS
EESD
PUSD
PLANNING STAFF

PS
PS/LPS
PS/MR LUCE
PS/PUS
SIR D HAITLAND

MR DAY
MR ASPIN
CABINET OFFICE

SECRET

OPS Subject on
South Africa June 19 T 32/80
Relations with S. Africa



Verw.
Ref.

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SERIAL No. T32/80

Kantoor van die Eerste Minister

Prime Minister's Office

CAPE TOWN

19 February 1980

SECRET

Prime Minister

1 fg. Amt - 27/2

Dear Prime Minister

It is with appreciation that I have noted your early and constructive response of 14th February as elucidated by Ambassador Leahy. I believe that our common concern about Soviet ambitions and the threat they represent provides a solid basis for the further consultations envisaged.

While I do not, as you know, believe that the discussions between us, based on this assessment of the Soviet danger, should necessarily await the Rhodesian election, I would nevertheless be happy if they could commence in the second half of next month, as you suggest. I view the proposed discussions at this crucial time in southern Africa's history of great importance. I also agree that we should not set excessively ambitious goals at the outset. We must begin with the foundations.

I look forward to hearing who your emissary will be and to meeting him or her in due course.

Yours sincerely

P W BOTHA

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister
LONDON