

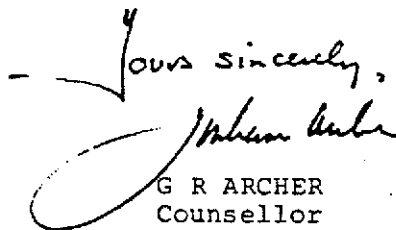
EMBASSY  
PARLIAMENT STREET, CAPE TOWN

11 February 1986

Private Secretary to  
The State President of the  
Republic of South Africa  
Tynhuys  
CAPE TOWN

*Dear Private Secretary,*

I enclose the text of a further message dated  
10 February, just received at the Embassy, which is  
addressed to the State President from the Rt Hon<sup>r</sup>  
Mrs Margaret Thatcher MP.

*Yours sincerely,*  
  
G R ARCHER  
Counsellor

CONFIDENTIAL

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO PRESIDENT P W BOTHA

Dear Mr President

Thank you for your letter of 24 January and the copy of your opening address to Parliament on 31 January. I read this with great interest and have been reflecting upon it since.

Let me say how much encouraged I was by your approach to the key issues of reform and dialogue. I see your speech as both constructive and courageous in this respect. The legislative measures which you announced represent concrete steps to implement change, while the statement of principles sets what I see as very important guidelines for the continuing process of reform. Your decision to present all these positive points in a single, comprehensive statement has ensured the maximum impact.

I can understand the political constraints to which you allude in your letter. At the same time, I know you are aware of the advantage to be gained by moving ahead resolutely with your programme of reform both for its own sake and to build up wider international understanding for what your Government is determined to achieve. For this reason I hope you will be able to take action soon to put into effect the other proposals outlined in your speech, in order to establish a steady momentum towards the successful resolution of South Africa's problems.

If those who now refuse negotiations and instead advocate violence can be brought to accept that the long term interests of all can only be secured by turning away from violence and entering into a process of dialogue then much will have been achieved. You ask what pressures the international community is bringing to bear on the African National Congress (ANC) to

/do this.

to this. My answer is: not enough. But it was precisely so that we could put to the ANC directly and unequivocally our condemnation of violence and our commitment to dialogue that we established a contact at official level with the ANC (while ruling out ministerial contact).

I believe that this message was clearly registered and understood. It is a message that Sir Geoffrey Howe also conveyed to the Foreign Ministers of the Front Line States at their recent meeting in Lusaka, and it is one which we shall continue to impress on those who have an interest in the future of South Africa.

I am encouraged by the successful outcome of the initial contact between your officials and the co-chairmen of the Commonwealth Group. The difficulties which this initiative faces are obvious and I do not underestimate the political sensitivity for your Government. But I do believe that the visit of the Group later this month represents an opportunity to build confidence in the process of dialogue inside and outside South Africa. I repeat my assurance that we shall do all in our power to assist that process to begin.

I was pleased to have your assurance that you remain committed to the success of the Nkomati Accord. As you will know, we have told the Mozambicans that you have left me in no doubt on this score. Unfortunately, the Vaz diaries gave the Mozambicans a shock. It is clear from several discussions with them that they have still not recovered from it, despite the very full account of the affair which you have given them and which you copied to me. The British Government remains willing to help clarify each side's position to the other, if that would help.

/ Thank

CONFIDENTIAL

Thank you for your good wishes which once again I should like to reciprocate.

Yours sincerely

MARGARET THATCHER

- 3 -

CONFIDENTIAL