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cc S. Africa  
relations with  
- Pt 2

(2)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
London SW1

Prime Minister  
These problems will be for  
discussion at an early meeting

of. of.

Phub - 4/9

10 September 1980

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Dear John,

SOUTH AFRICA

As Peter Carrington is on holiday I am replying to your letter of 8 September about Namibia and sanctions against South Africa.

I agree that the South African reply to the United Nations Secretary General was not as positive as we would have wished. But behind the rhetoric a continuing readiness to proceed towards implementation of the UN plan was clearly evident. So far the reply has been treated by the UN and by the Front Line States as offering possibilities for bringing agreement nearer on implementation of the UN Settlement Plan. Certainly there appears to be no disposition - so far - to regard it as a cause for further recourse to the Security Council or for renewed demands for sanctions.

That being said I agree that our aim must be to persuade our allies that their interests, like ours, require that we do everything possible to avoid sanctions demands being made, and that we should together resist them if they are. The Anglo-French summit will have a very wide agenda, but we are naturally including the point in our briefing for the Prime Minister.

At the officials meeting in New York on 11/12 September about Namibia I have no doubt that there will be discussion of sanctions particularly, but not only, in the Namibia context. In any such  
/discussion

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discussion our object will be to convince our partners that the interests of all of us would be best served, in the event of sanctions demands, by a triple US/French/British veto in the Security Council. But I think it would be mistaken at this stage to indicate that we would veto regardless. This would simply allow our partners to conclude that they could hide behind a British veto. A solitary British veto could be very damaging to our overall interests in Black Africa, including our extensive commercial interests. It will therefore be tactically wise to cast doubt on our readiness to incur the odium of a solitary veto, and thus reinforce the need for our partners to take their own stands against sanctions. In this way we hope that the result will be united Western opposition.

I agree that we will certainly need to study the results of the official examination of the impact of sanctions or a veto.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, other Members of OD, to Keith Joseph and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

your  
/an