



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

cc Press
cc FCO

The Office of the Leader of
the Opposition

13 September 1984

Dear Prime Minister,

You will know that the South African Minister of Justice, Louis le Grange, last month issued a detention order against a number of critics of the government. Subsequently, the Supreme Court declared the Minister's order invalid and ordered the release of the detainees. I am sure you will also be aware that the Minister has since issued a fresh order for their re-detention.

I understand that this morning some of those against whom this order has been made, leading figures in the United Democratic Front and the Natal Indian Congress, have sought temporary sanctuary in the British Consulate in Durban and have asked that Her Majesty's Government intervene with the South African authorities to prevent their being detained without trial by the South African police.

I urge you to ensure that the Government responds positively to this request by communicating urgently with the South African government and by instructing the consul to provide protection until a satisfactory reply is received. There can be no doubt that, if denied the protection and assistance of Her Majesty's Government, the individuals concerned will be re-arrested and detained without trial for an indefinite period. I am certain that you would not wish to be responsible - directly or indirectly - for the renewed detention without trial of people whose only 'crime' is to seek basic freedoms for their people.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP



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COMMUNIST

19 SEP 1984

