

PRIME MINISTER

SOUTH AFRICA

The attached letter conveys (on pages 2 and 3) the Foreign Secretary's recommendation that we should now subscribe to the package of restrictive measures agreed by the Nine on 10 September. He wants to announce this at a meeting of Community Foreign Ministers in New York tomorrow night.

You were particularly concerned on two points:-

(i) Oil. The Department of Energy confirm that our obligations would be no greater than at present, i.e. would apply only to the export of crude oil. We would not have any legal means to enforce the ban (any more than we do at present). Nor would we be surrendering competence to decide our own measures to cover export of oil to third countries. The result overall would be no change in the present position;

Crude oil from the West see (not land) checked (not withdrawn) to S.A. Please confirm present policy which is to refuse

(ii) Defence Attaches. The JIC concluded (see paper in the Hot Box) that there would be no unacceptable from withdrawal of the Attaches

deleted and retained under Section 3(4). Passage (M. Wayland, 24/6/14)

I understand that the Defence Secretary is minuting in the same sense. The fact remains, however, that no-one has shown that withdrawal of Defence Attaches is justified on its own merits, or likely to have any effect at all on the South African Government's policies (except to make them more hostile to us). If you remain opposed to this step, we might explore subscribing to the other measures but not this one (which after all is no business of most of the Ten).

There is also the question of timing. If we are going to join the position of the Nine, do we do it now? Or spin it out so

that we do so only just before CHOGM? There seems to me to have been some slackening of the pressure on South Africa in the last week or so.

There is also the question of how we do it. The draft statement prepared by the FCO rather gives the impression of us crawling into the position of the Ten under pressure. We could adopt a more forthright approach.

"The United Kingdom confirms that it ~~in practice~~ is applying the restrictive measures listed in the Nine's statement of 10 September, indeed in the case of oil is in practice alone in doing so. The UK confirms its intention to continue to apply these measures while it judges this appropriate and thus to act in conformity with the statement made in Luxembourg on 10 September. On the particular question of Defence Attaches, which is a matter of concern only to a limited number of Member States, the United Kingdom is continuing to consider its position." *Defence is not within the competence of the EEC*

So points for decision are:

(i) Content to subscribe to all the measures adopted by the Ten?

Or decline to withdraw Defence Attaches?

(ii) Content to announce now that we are lifting our reserve?

Or prefer to say that we are still considering the matter, thus postponing a decision?

(iii) Agree to draft FCO statement?

Or prefer a more robust declaration?

C.D.P.

Charles Powell
23 September 1985

JD3ACC

Prefer your statement above. We must not look as if we are being whipped into line. - especially as the French seem to be applying military sanctions