

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH BISHOP TUTU

He is coming for thirty minutes. He will be accompanied by Terry Waite.

You will want to get clear at the beginning that he is opposed to violence.

He will probably tackle you on sanctions, on which he has criticised HMG.

The most useful subject to explore is the mechanics of a possible dialogue between the South African Government and blacks.

You might also touch on the role of South African business in breaking down apartheid. (Terry Waite is interested in this).

CDP

C.D. Powell

2 October 1985



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

2 October 1985

COG 2/16.

Dear Charles,

Prime Minister's Meeting with Bishop Tutu, 3 October

/ Thank you for your letter of 25 September. I enclose
breifing for this meeting.

/ I also enclose a draft press line. It will be important
to avoid the meeting being portrayed in the press as simply
a disagreement about sanctions. The press line therefore
emphasises the extent to which our own views on the urgent
need for reform in South Africa coincide with those of
Bishop Tutu. This could be strengthened and made more
newsworthy by including the last sentence.

Yours ever,
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing Street

PS The Bishop will be
preaching in the Foreign
Secretary's constituency
next Sunday.



PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH BISHOP TUTU, 3 OCTOBER

OUR OBJECTIVES

1. To convince Tutu of the sincerity of the British Government's opposition to apartheid and our desire to see a dialogue on peaceful change started in South Africa.
2. To sound out Tutu on the prospects and conditions for such a dialogue and seek his views on what more can be done politically/diplomatically to encourage one.
3. To persuade Tutu that there are good reasons for our opposition to economic sanctions and that it is not just a matter of self-interest.
4. To encourage Tutu to continue to oppose violence and remain committed to peaceful change.

POINTS TO MAKE

- i) Wholeheartedly opposed to apartheid and in favour of non-violent change towards a system of government which commands the support of the people of South Africa as a whole.
- ii) Dialogue essential if fundamental problems to be solved. How in practical terms could such a dialogue be brought about?
- iii) We have called for the release of Mandela, abolition of influx control, pass laws and group areas act, and end of state of emergency. What more can we usefully do through diplomatic channels? What can others do? What will bring black leaders to come forward?
- iv) Opposed to economic sanctions because genuinely believe they will not lead South African Government to make reforms. Market forces already exerting sufficient and more politically effective pressure.
- v) Condemn violence from all quarters. Polarisation and violence decrease chances of eventual successful settlement.



HIS OBJECTIVES

- i) To ask us to increase pressure on South Africa to end the state of emergency.

- ii) To urge us to agree to economic sanctions at CHOGM.

YOUR RESPONSE

- i) We will continue to exert our influence to press for reform.

- ii) Have for many years observed restrictions in our relationship with South Africa (Gleneagles Agreement, UN Arms Embargo). Recent EC package largely measures we already observe.

- iii) EC package sends clear political signal to Pretoria without damaging South African economy.

- iv) Constantly use diplomatic channels to express our view. Recent examples of representations in Pretoria:

19 September over invasion of Angola

27 September over detention without trial

- v) Firmly opposed to economic sanctions. Would strengthen the white right wing. By creating more unemployment and poverty in the townships would heighten violence and lead to increased polarisation and repression. Would also hurt South Africa's neighbours. To advocate economic sanctions is to seek a violent confrontation, not a peaceful settlement.



DRAFT PRESS LINE

The Prime Minister and Bishop Tutu had a full exchange of views on the current situation in South Africa.

The Prime Minister emphasized the Government's total opposition to apartheid. The Prime Minister and Bishop Tutu shared a desire for an early and peaceful transition to a system of government acceptable to the people of South Africa as a whole. They agreed on the urgent need for the South African Government to take concrete steps towards opening up a dialogue with credible leaders of the black community. These should include the lifting of the state of emergency and the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela.



BACKGROUND

References:

- A LPR
- B Budd-Powell letter 23 September
- C Article from the Times, 1 October
- D Archer-Reeve letter 16 September

1. Bishop Tutu is probably the most popular black leader in South Africa not in detention. In a recent Sunday Times/mori opinion poll among South African blacks, 24% said Tutu would make the best President, placing him a clear second behind Nelson Mandela (49%); (Chief Buthelezi got 6%).

2. Tutu's opinions have noticeably hardened during the past year as a result of the State of Emergency and increased government repression. Originally opposed to economic sanctions, he stated at his enthronement as Bishop of Johannesburg early this year that he would call for them after 18 months in the absence of real progress. However, after the disappointment of President Botha's speech of 15 August, Tutu decided to call for sanctions now. He has not made clear, however, exactly what kind of sanctions he has in mind.

3. He does not, however, call for the breaking off of diplomatic relations because he wishes diplomatic pressure to be brought to bear. He also supports the positive involvement of foreign companies in fields such as education and training and housing.

4. He has recently criticised the UK for, in his view, failing to put pressure on the South African government and helping to maintain the apartheid system by refusing to support economic sanctions. This criticism is widespread among South African blacks.

5. Bishop Tutu's presence has been effective in preventing several potentially violent incidents, but he has voiced concern that his non-violent stance will lose him support among an



increasingly frustrated black community.

6. Bishop Tutu claims he is not a leader but only a churchman thrust into the limelight by the forceable absence of the real leaders of the people; and that once his work towards securing their freedom and the basis of black rule is complete, he wishes to fade from the limelight. He appears genuine in this and his ambition is probably to become Archbishop rather than President in South Africa.

7. While opposed to violence, Tutu supports non violent civil disobedience. On 11 September Tutu threatened to call in October a week long strike if the government did not lift the State of Emergency, withdraw the SADF from the townships, release political detainees and talk to authentic black representatives.

