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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 188(11)/85

cc

THE STATE HOUSE,
DAR ES SALAAM,
TANZANIA.

12th October 1985

Prime Minister Mrs. Margaret Thatcher,
10 Downing Street,
London, S.W.1,
U.K.

Dear Margaret,

Thank you for your prompt and frank reply to my letter of 10th October 1985; the personal relationship between us, and my confidence that we respect each other's intellect and views, encourages me to continue the discussion in writing as we shall not be able to do so in person at Nassau.- although I am glad that you will be talking with Ndugu Salim.

I certainly do recognise that apartheid is repugnant to you, and I have never questioned the sincerity of your feelings. The problem is, as you say, the means of achieving change. And there is also the problem of getting a united position in the Commonwealth on this issue.

The purpose of Tanzania and the other advocates of a sanctions Resolution by the Commonwealth - and I believe also of Britain - is to bring apartheid to an end. And we, like Britain, also want serious negotiations to bring the violence to an end as quickly as possible. But apartheid has been met by calls to negotiate with the Black majority since 1948; sabotage leading to an armed struggle was not even adopted as a policy by the African National Congress until 1960. It has still not got to any serious proportions; the unrest - and the lynchings - which have led to the intensified violence from the police and army are quite clearly spontaneous expressions of anger and frustration by a virtually unarmed people. Yet the South African authorities have for all these years consistently ignored the calls for talks; they are still not prepared to negotiate the 'how' and the 'where' of change with real representatives of the majority of the South African people.

Those Governments and peoples who call for sanctions do so in the recognition that they are a pressure for serious negotiations, and that without such pressures these are still not likely to take place before the offer to negotiate comes too late for any African leader to assert some kind of leadership and control over the angry young people. Indeed, it is already dangerously late; it will be very difficult indeed for any African leader - including Mandela - to get control of the situation which has been allowed to develop.

Sanctions are designed to make the South African Government face up to reality before the unrest and violence leads to ungovernable chaos, and still worse violence. And I believe that what has already happened - including the actions by the Bankers and Money Markets as well as the limited sanctions announced by President Reagan - indicate that sanctions can have a positive effect in promoting a movement towards change.

I also maintain my belief that without sanctions on the Smith Regime in Rhodesia, Mr. Smith would not have agreed to the Lancaster House negotiations. Sanctions had, unfortunately, to be bolstered by an Armed Struggle in that country, but it was these two combined pressures which led to the success of the Lusaka initiative in which you played such a vital role. For you will remember that Mr. Smith for a long time talked about African rule not coming in a thousand years. He had to be forced to negotiate.

Obviously, there are two ways in which Commonwealth unity can be achieved over South African apartheid at Nassau. The first is that all should apply sanctions; the second is that all reject sanctions - or at least the call for them from the Commonwealth. It is, however, quite clear that the vast majority - probably all except Britain - are very committed to there being a clear Commonwealth call for at least some minimum economic sanctions. Those I suggested in my last

letter are (as I explained) much less than most of us would like to see applied, and are an attempt to meet your own position and Britain's traditional economic links with South Africa; they are very little more than President Reagan has already announced and they would have the very minimum adverse effect on the British economy.

For I join with you in wanting to avoid a 'sterile wrangle over sanctions leading to serious divisions in the Commonwealth'; indeed, that was why I wrote to you. But it does seem more reasonable to ask Britain to join in a compromise position likely to be accepted by everyone else - albeit with some reluctance on the grounds that its measures are inadequate - than to ask all the other members of the Commonwealth to accept Britain's position of there being no call for any economic sanctions at all.

Forgive this long letter; I am necessarily writing in a hurry in the hope of reaching you before the Commonwealth Conference starts. For I do in truth write with goodwill, both towards yourself and towards Britain, and I am confident that you will at least consider these further arguments. My aim is to see all the prophets of doom, and all the hostile critics of Britain, proved wrong about what will happen at Nassau. And it seems to me that only you can now achieve that.

I send my personal good wishes to you, as always.

Yours sincerely,

Julius K. Nyerere.

S. AFRICA

RELATIONS

PT 7