

OPS
cc Subject
master

CCPC

Subject filed on
SOUTH AFRICA:
Relations: Pt 9



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No: T 708/86

Tuynhuys
Cape Town

10 April 1986

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 20 March 1986. Your obvious interest in a cessation of violence and the promotion of a process of negotiation and dialogue in South Africa is appreciated.

You will be aware from previous statements which I have made on the issue of the release of Mr Nelson Mandela that the South African Government's basic concern is that his release should not be accompanied by or result in further violence. Any escalation in violence at the time of his release would force the security authorities to take counter-action including action against those responsible for or associated with the violence. It is my view, and I have stated it publicly, that Mr Mandela is in effect being kept in prison by the South African Communist Party and its affiliate, the African National Congress as it suits them that he should remain in prison.

It must be clear that the key to the:

- release of Mr Mandela and similar prisoners,
- withdrawal of the security forces from certain urban areas and

- lifting of the ban on the ANC and PAC,

is a cessation of violence.

If the South African Government could receive a definite assurance to the effect that violence would cease, it would be prepared to consider moves along the lines suggested in the "possible negotiating concept" of the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons but then on the clear understanding that in the event of a continuation or escalation of violence punitive action against South Africa would not be forthcoming should appropriate measures be taken by the security forces to contain the violence.

I said in an earlier letter to you that if the Group confined itself to promoting peaceful political dialogue and discouraging violence and could be seen to be unbiased in this respect, it could serve a useful purpose. An assurance by the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons that the ANC and others would cease their violence, would undoubtedly facilitate a constructive response from my Government to the Group's concept and would pave the way for the continuation of their work - subject, naturally, to the condition that they would have no right to interfere in South Africa's internal affairs or prescribe how any possible future constitutional dispensation should look.

I am, however, concerned about what I perceive to be a lack of understanding on the part of some Western Governments of the policies and objectives of the African National Congress. The question which has been exercising my mind is whether Western Governments are

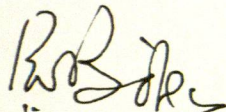
aware that the majority of the members of the executive of the ANC are also members of the South African Communist Party and that the ANC has close links with international terrorism. Indeed there are indications that some members of the ANC and PAC are being trained in and directed from Libya. I trust that whatever happens along the road ahead, the British Government would not expect me to negotiate a new constitutional order for South Africa on the basis of a one party state; nationalisation of private property; a government controlled press; a restricted judicial system; and no guarantees of fundamental human rights and civil liberties including the protection of minority rights.

I am also concerned about condemnatory statements directed at the South African Government alone by, for example, the European Community without any categorical rejection of the violence and political aims of the ANC and others. The ANC needs to be told bluntly by democratic governments that their principles and policies are unacceptable.

What is at least helpful in the approach of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group is its recognition that future positive actions on the part of the South African Government should be matched by corresponding responses by those now opposed to negotiation and committed to violence. I trust that you will agree that continued insistence on change without insistence on a matching performance by the ANC and others and continued invocation of the threat of further sanctions serve only to encourage further obduracy on the part of those who have thus far turned their backs on a peaceful solution.

I again place on record my appreciation for your constructive involvement in this matter.

Yours sincerely



P W BOTHA
STATE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON