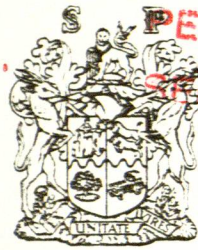


OPS
CC MASTER

SUBJECT - On S. AFRICA
Relations. Pt. II



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. I.5 1122/86

Union Buildings
Pretoria

1 July 1986

Dear Prime Minister

I have received the text of your letter of 27 June 1986.

I should like to reaffirm my appreciation for your opposition to demands for punitive sanctions against my country. I realise that tremendous pressure is being brought to bear upon you.

I have always respected the forthright and frank manner in which you have corresponded with me. I believe that this is the best approach. In the same vein may I take issue with you on some of the matters raised in your letter.

Firstly, you express the view that the overall thrust and intention of the European Council's decision is positive. An analysis of the contents of that decision points to the contrary.

For instance, you present as positive the fact that consideration of immediate punitive measures against South Africa has been deferred pending consultation with the United States, Japan and others. However, according to the Council statement, that consultation will be "on further measures which might be needed covering in particular a ban on new investments, the import of coal, iron, steel, and gold coins from South Africa."

You say furthermore that the Council's decision does not constitute an ultimatum. Sir Geoffrey Howe has expressed a similar view. I believe it is an ultimatum: the Council calls on the South African Government to take certain steps and then proceeds to refer to consultation with other industrialised countries, in the next three months, on further measures which might be needed. The implication is clear: if the South African Government does not comply, further measures will be considered.

It is interesting, in this connection, that the two actions which the South African Government is called upon to take, are actions which, among others, the Eminent Persons Group suggested that the South African Government might take but then only in return for assured rewards. In fact, members of the EPG frequently stated that the Government should make no further concession except as part of a package requiring the African National Congress and other parties to "suspend" violence and enter into negotiations. These are actions which we are now called upon to take unilaterally and without any assurance of any quid pro quo from the ANC and others. This is a contradiction which disturbs me. Surely my hands must be immeasurably weakened and my negotiating position undermined by concessions which I am required to make, one after the other in quick succession, without any matching performance on the part of other parties.

I am concerned also about the reference to the need for the start of an immediate dialogue with the "authentic leaders of the Black populations". The implication is that the dialogue which has been in process for some time with a variety of Black leaders - democratically elected, traditionally accepted and other acknowledged leaders - is of no consequence.

The implication that they are not "authentic" is an unacceptable reflection on them and the people they represent. For my part, I am ready to enter into negotiations with anyone who abandons violence as a means of achieving political objectives. It seems, however, that only Black leaders who resort to terrorism and violence are regarded as "authentic".

You say in your letter that you agreed on a number of additional measures to assist Black South Africans. This in itself is a worthy objective. But what the Council in fact also did was to proceed from the assumption that the unfortunate people of Crossroads, and the "political prisoners" who have been arrested since the imposition of the state of emergency, are "victims of apartheid". This is simply not true.

I regret very much that at the very moment that my Government is providing visible proof of its commitment to the democratic ideal, evidenced again by the promulgation on 1 July of further far-reaching legislative reform measures, the demand for punitive measures against South Africa should be increasing.

Let me repeat: I am committed to power-sharing and to the enshrinement in a new constitution of democratic principles which are accepted in the Western democratic world as pre-requisites for any democratic state. Yet when I appealed to the participants in the Tokyo summit to endorse those principles in respect of a future South Africa and to condemn violence as a political instrument, the response, except for yours, was total silence. Instead we are being asked to release persons hitherto committed to violence and to unban and negotiate with organisations which refuse to forego violence. It is even acceptable to the Western democracies that these organisations retain in their

negotiating armory the possibility of reverting to violence when it serves their interests, clearly implied in the acceptance of "suspension" and rejection of "renunciation" of violence in the vocabulary of the Commonwealth and European Governments.

Would it not serve our mutual interests best and undermine those of the enemies of the West, if we were to devise and implement a democratic system of Government for South Africa based on a negotiated form of power-sharing? This can be achieved by resolute action not only on the part of the South African Government but equally on the part of the Western democracies. Why should the European Community become the captive of UN majority groupings which do not have the interests of the West at heart? Far from joining in a punitive campaign against my country the West should refuse to compromise its own ideals.

No government, mine included, submits to threats, ultimatums or intimidation and the leaders of the Western world should know better than to resort to such a strategy in the case of South Africa. It is not only counter-productive; it is unnecessary since my Government is committed to negotiations. This is an essential element in the reform process. I do not require the pressure of punitive action to embark on this course of action. The circumstances hindering that process need not be spelt out in this letter. They are well-known to you. I hope Sir Geoffrey Howe will concentrate on them in carrying out his assignment.

The emphasis must be on peace not violence, on democratic ideals not totalitarianism expressed by some organisations. It must be on economic development and an expansion of the free market system not on the

debilitation and deprivation caused by sanctions, nor the kind of socialist catastrophe which has brought so much misery and poverty to most of Africa. It must be on the realities of our multi-cultural society, not a deliberate obfuscation of those realities with a repetition of the bloody encounters which have characterised the history of states elsewhere in Africa.

When the European Council, the Eminent Persons Group and others talk about "national dialogue", "genuine negotiations" and "authentic leaders", there must be clarity on the basic issues that are under consideration.

We must not be drawn into a game of deception - the achievement of ends other than those professed so eloquently for example in the Council's call for "... negotiations leading to a truly democratic and non-racial South Africa."

We sometimes ponder over what our foreign critics really have in mind when they use slogans such as "authentic leaders", "genuine negotiations", "a truly democratic and non-racial South Africa"

- the ANC led by Mandela and Tambo?
- a transfer of power to the ANC?
- a totalitarian socialist-type state or a one-party dictatorship, the hallmark of African Statehood?

The Government of South Africa cannot afford to skate around such issues. We have a task and a responsibility to our peoples and to our region.

We are a sovereign state, and we are a proud people. How does the world expect us to react to the pervasive pressure of punitive measures?

I can only hope that your actions in the future will not force you and other leaders in Europe to lament as did Lloyd George when referring to South Africa, that "A war of annexation against a proud people must be a war of extermination, and that is unfortunately what it seems we are now committing ourselves to ...".

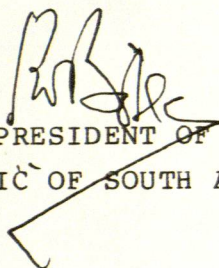
As far as Mr Nelson Mandela's release is concerned, I have stated my position on more than one occasion, most recently in my letter to you dated 26 May 1986. My position was widely regarded as reasonable. I also regard it as such.

As far as the possibility of Sir Geoffrey visiting Mr Mandela is concerned, I shall take a decision on the matter after I, and possibly some of my Ministers, have had occasion to meet with Sir Geoffrey.

I look forward to receiving Sir Geoffrey in acknowledgement of your efforts to resist the imposition of sanctions. But, this should not be construed as detracting from our often stated position, which is sanctioned by international law, that we shall not tolerate foreign intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of the Republic of South Africa.

I hope that we can also use the opportunity of Sir Geoffrey's visit to achieve a sound understanding of exactly what the future holds for Southern Africa as a whole.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'P. W. Botha', is written over the typed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

STATE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON