

PRIME MINISTER

INTERVIEW WITH BEELD

You are to give an interview tomorrow to the Editor of Beeld, the <sup>main</sup> Afrikaans daily newspaper in South Africa. We have already given him the written questions and answers in the attached folder which you approved over the weekend. The idea is that the oral interview can then be rather shorter - say half an hour - and deal with more general topics.

Beeld used to be pro-apartheid, but has now adopted more enlightened views. The South African Ambassador here has sent me some examples of its recent editorial comment to show you where it now stands. They are in the folder. It is seen by Robin Renwick as one of the main channels for getting across our message to Afrikaaner opinion in South Africa, and there is no doubt that your interview will receive very prominent coverage indeed.

I think the main points you will want to get across in the oral part of the interview are:

- You believe in giving credit where credit is due and you have always recognised that the South African Government have taken important steps to reform the apartheid system and promote economic development. But they have not done enough. At the end of the day, no amount of economic advance is a substitute for abolishing discrimination based on race and colour and giving people their basic political rights.
- Your opposition to sanctions does not mean that you think nothing more needs to be done in South Africa. There must be change: but you do not think sanctions will help achieve it, only make matters worse.
- You will want to give a strong welcome to the agreement reached on Angola/Namibia. South Africa deserves great



credit for this.

- The reprieve of the Sharpeville 6 was a matter for South Africa. You did not intervene on the merits of the case, only to urge clemency.
- You will be pressed on whether you will visit South Africa. I think you have to stick on the position that you have no plans at present to do so. But you would be willing to go if you thought that your visit would help end apartheid and promote positive change.
- You will want to commend the work of British companies in South Africa in breaking down racial discrimination and make clear your opposition to disinvestment.
- You may be pressed on your attitude to the ANC. You will want to make clear that you are utterly opposed to terrorism and violence of every sort. But it would be better to avoid describing the ANC as a terrorist organisation as such. You see the main task as getting the ANC to give up the politics of violence and embark on negotiation.
- I think they will also want to ask one or two personal questions about the job of Prime Minister, what you regard as the most difficult time of your career, your biggest single achievement, and for how long you intend to go on being Prime Minister.

C.D.P

CHARLES POWELL

28 November 1988

EL3DDI



## PRIME MINISTER'S INTERVIEW WITH EDITOR OF "BEELD"

Q1. You have been called all kinds of names because of your "defence" of South Africa on matters like sanctions. Why is this stance so important to you that you risk your popularity with so many people (notably the members of your own Commonwealth) because of a country you have visited only once?

Opposition to punitive sanctions against South Africa often is mis-represented as support for apartheid. That is simply nonsense. Apartheid is contrary to my whole philosophy, which is that people should be able to live where they like in their own country, exercise their full democratic rights and advance according to merit, not the colour of their skin. The reasons I oppose further sanctions against South Africa are clear. I cannot think how you can hope to make things better in South Africa by making them worse. General sanctions would put large numbers of black South Africans out of work permanently, would create immense hardship for their dependents and would be likely also to have disastrous effects in the neighbouring states. They would not make the South African Government more responsive to the need for change, and would instead contribute to internal polarisation and violence. I find it very difficult to see how that could help the cause of those struggling for positive change in South Africa.

Q.2 President Reagan recently told the United States Congress that (I quote) "The 1986 sanctions have increased the appeal to whites of isolationist, ultra-conservative and white supremacist movements". Do you agree that the world plays into the hands of the extreme right by increasing pressure on the country? And what will Britain's attitude to South Africa be should the far right get into power?

I think that increasing isolation does play into the hands of the extreme right. That is why I oppose it. As to the possibility of the far right getting into power, I prefer to think that white South Africans will have the sense not to permit that to happen.



Q3. How do you feel about the use of sport boycotts as a political weapon against South Africa? Will you for instance support or object to the planned world rugby tour of South Africa next year to mark the South African Board's centenary? Will you agree to a lions' tour of South Africa?

We abide by the terms of the Gleneagles Agreement. It is not for me to decide about rugby tours. Decisions of that nature are taken by the rugby boards, who are not under Government control. I do welcome, however, the initiative taken by Dr Craven towards full integration in sport and to help reduce South Africa's isolation.

#### SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS

Q4. In a recent speech in Belgium you rejected the idea of a United States of Europe. You said 'Europe will be stronger precisely because it has France as France, Spain as Spain, Britain as Britain, each with its own customs, traditions and identities. It would be folly to try to fit them into some sort of identikit European personality'. In South Africa we have at least ten different population groups which by these criteria may well claim to be called separate nations, each having its own language, customs, culture, traditions, religion, etc. In view of this, do you think that the political philosophy behind South Africa's homelands policy deserves more understanding?

In Europe we are dealing with twelve countries which have existed for centuries as independent nations. We do not recognise the 'independence' of the homelands. I do think that arrangements will have to be worked out for South Africa which take account of the country's diversity. But it is for South Africans, black and white, not for me, to lay down what those arrangements should be.



Q5. How do you see the future of South Africa? What do you actually expect to happen? How do you see the future of the white man in South Africa?

I believe that South Africa, like all other countries, has the capacity to change its future. Unless bold initiatives are taken, violence may increase and South Africa could become more isolated. That is not what I want to see happen. I believe that if courageous reform steps are taken, it will be possible to look forward to a very different future in which all South Africans can play their full part and live peacefully together. As for the white community, they have an indispensable part to play, both now and in the future. It is not only the Afrikaners who have deep roots in South Africa and who have helped to develop the agriculture, industry and infrastructure to the state it has reached today. It is essential to preserve and build on what has been achieved and in that regard as in others the white community has a vital role to play.

Q6. At the moment one man one vote in a unitary state is an unacceptable idea to the vast majority of white people, inter alia because of the difference between the population groups. May I ask: what is your opinion of this question?

At every stage I have made it clear that future constitutional arrangements for South Africa must be worked out by South Africans. They cannot be laid down by outsiders. I must add that I do not see how, in the modern world, it is possible to achieve political stability except on a basis where all adults have the vote. The issue is to reconcile the exercise of those normal democratic rights, which cannot be denied, with the reasonable protection of minority interests. How that is to be done has to be negotiated between South Africans.



Q7. Will you agree that South Africa has indeed moved a long way on the road of reform under President P.W. Botha? What other reforms would you most like to see in the near future?

I do indeed agree that many reforms have been carried through under President Botha and I have often paid tribute to these - in particular to the legalisation of black trade unions, the scrapping of the pass laws under which hundreds of thousands of people were arrested every year, and the ending of job reservation. As to what further steps might be taken, I have made clear that I would like to see progress towards the abolition of the Group Areas Act. I do not believe that would have the dramatic consequences some people seem to fear: where people live is decided mainly by economic considerations. But, surely, people should have the right so far as possible to live where they wish. There are other steps I would like to see taken. I will come to those later.

Q8. How do you assess our state President's recent visits to African countries and his initiatives in the region? What do you think of political developments in Angola and Namibia? Do you foresee a lasting peace in that area?

I welcome President Botha's recent visits to other African countries. We attach great importance, and have ourselves worked hard to contribute, to the normalisation of relations between South Africa and Mozambique. We have very strongly and directly supported the negotiating effort to bring peace in Angola, and an internationally recognised settlement for Namibia. Those negotiations are bearing fruit: it seems at last that there is agreement on the total withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. This achievement will unblock the other problems in the way of Namibian independence. We shall be continuing to do everything in our power to help the talks on the remaining issues succeed. Apart from the benefits that could bring for the people of Angola and



Namibia, it would also be of great benefit to South Africa in terms of its relations with other states in the region and in the outside world.

Q9. In your opinion, should South Africa end the state of emergency immediately, gradually, or keep it up for as long as it is deemed necessary?

I do not think any country should reconcile itself to the prospect of living semi-permanently in a state of emergency. I hope that the state of emergency will be ended soon and that steps will be taken to normalise the situation. That, I believe, can best be done through the concept of negotiations in which all parties can participate, in the context of a suspension of violence on both sides. That concept has not yet been accepted. But I believe that it will be accepted one day and that it offers the best way forward.

Q10. You have mentioned that you may visit South Africa provided your visit could help to break down apartheid. Exactly what did you mean by that? And what are the chances that we may see you in South Africa soon?

I have no present plans to visit South Africa. But I certainly would visit your country if I believed that, in doing so, I could help to end apartheid and promote positive change.



MANDELA

Q11. Do you think that releasing Mandela will make all that much difference to the world's opinion (and may I say, prejudice) of South Africa?

I think that releasing Nelson Mandela, provided he is released without being subject to all sorts of restrictions, would make a great difference to the world's opinion of South Africa. If he were to die in prison, I believe that would have disastrous consequences for South Africa. If he were released, that could help to open up the prospects for real negotiation internally and, as you know, I have consistently supported that. I welcome the recent announcement that he will not be returned to prison.

Q12. The reasons for your concern about Nelson Mandela are obvious. But recently you have also expressed yourself strongly in favour of clemency for the six people commonly referred to as the Sharpeville Six. Why did you get involved in this case, because the "Six" were after all tried and sentenced by a South African Court of Law, and even our worst enemies admit that South African courts are fair and just, and free from political interference?

There were features of the case of the Sharpeville Six which caused many of us not to question the Court's verdict, but to appeal for clemency. I am glad that clemency was exercised.



## INTERFERENCE

Q13. Do you think there may be enough common ground for you and President Botha to get together and have a fruitful discussion on South African problems and the way in affects world affairs?

President Botha and I had long, very frank and useful talks at Chequers in 1984. I am in regular touch with him. If a further meeting would help to advance matters at some point, that will be a matter to be decided by us at the time.

## TERRORISM AND THE ANC

Q14. At last year's Commonwealth conference you have described the ANC as a "typical terrorist organisation". The British Government afterwards described them as a representative black opposition organisation of South Africa and made it clear that it will stay in touch with the ANC. It was also reported that the statement was made with your approval. Does that mean there was a shift in your attitude towards the ANC, if so, why?

In your opinion, what is the difference between the IRA and the ANC?

Our attitude has not changed at all. I consistently have made clear the total opposition and abhorrence of the British Government for terrorist actions, whoever they may be committed by. Indiscriminate acts of terrorism such as letting off bombs in restaurants and in the street are not something I will ever condone. We will go on condemning them and have made that very clear to the ANC. I have made clear also my opposition to violent actions by the security forces.

As a political movement, the ANC undoubtedly is a factor in South African politics. The question is how to get it to give up the politics of violence. The best approach is by offering the possibility of negotiations. I have already made clear my view on that, which is that the way should be opened for a



negotiation between all the parties, in the context of a suspension of violence on all sides.

As to the difference between the IRA and the ANC, the IRA is a terrorist movement which seeks to impose its views by violent means. Let me remind you that there is universal suffrage in Northern Ireland, as in the rest of the United Kingdom. The vote is denied to no-one. All people in Northern Ireland have the right to express their views in a democratic way. Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, attracts few votes. That is why the IRA resort to violence.

Q15. Recently Britian's SAS unit crossed the border with Spain to Gibraltar and shot and killed three IRA terrorists to prevent them exploding a car bomb. It is not quite the same thing but how do you feel about South Africa's pre-emptive strikes into neighbouring countries used by ANC-terrorists as a springboard for their terrorist attacks in South Africa?

The three IRA terrorists were shot dead in Gibraltar, which is a British Dependent Territory, for the security of which the British Government is responsible. The terrorists were on a mission to plant a huge bomb in Gibraltar and were shot when they failed to respond to challenges from the security forces. At no time did the soldiers cross into Spain. In Northern Ireland, where we are working closely with the Irish Government to improve security in the border area, British security forces scrupulously respect the border. There is no question of their breaching the border in pursuit of terrorists and at all times the security forces operate within the law.



## WORLD AFFAIRS

Q16. Mr. Bush has just been elected the next President of the United States. You met the President-Elect during your visit to Washington a fortnight ago. To what extent do you think you will be able to work together in dealing with the problems of Southern Africa? Do you foresee any drastic changes in the United States' foreign policies under the new administration?

I was very glad to meet the President-Elect during my visit to Washington. He is of course an old and greatly valued friend and we have worked very closely together for many years. I do not foresee any major changes in the foreign policy of the United States and I have no doubt that we shall be able to work very closely together in dealing with the problems of Southern Africa.

Q17. At the Conservative Party's Annual Conference you warned the West to stay on its guard against Communism. Does that mean that you are sceptical of Mr. Gorbachev's reform plans?

As you know, I have met President Gorbachev several times and am looking forward to seeing him again in London next month. I do not doubt the seriousness of his reform plans. I support what he is trying to do because I believe it will increase the freedom of individual people in the Soviet Union. But the Soviet system is not going to change overnight and we must continue to be on guard against its efforts to spread its influence in the world at our expense. At the same time we should take opportunities to put across the idea that confrontation serves no purpose.



Q18. Is there any special message you would like me to convey to South Africans?

The message I would most like you to convey to South Africans is that positive change is possible. It is indeed inevitable. It requires a real effort of will and of courage to break away from the past. But unless you are prepared to do it, and to tackle the problems boldly, they will be in danger of overwhelming you. That is the problem we had to face in Britain and that is the way we tried to deal with it. I was very struck by the phrase in a policy document of the Broederbond: 'The greatest risk is not taking any risks'. That is true of my whole philosophy and I believe that it is as relevant to South Africa as it was to Britain.

#### THATCHERISM

Q19. I think I can safely say that you have captured the imagination of the whole world with what you have achieved in Britain since you became Prime Minister. In a little more than a decade you have transformed it from a struggling country to one of the most prosperous in the western world. 'Thatcherism' is the term widely used to describe your special style of leadership and government. Will you please define that ('Thatcherism') in more detail and also tell us what you regard as the secret of your success? In particular how you succeeded in taming the notoriously militant British trade unions of some decades ago, how you brought down the inflation rate to what it is at the moment, the unemployment figure to its lowest point in many years and turned Britain back from what looked like a road to certain disaster to what it is today?



I inherited a situation in which the economy was stagnating: industry was suffering from serious over-manning: Britain was falling behind the other industrialised nations: and there was indeed a feeling that our economic decline was irreversible. I did not accept any of that. I set about trying to change things fundamentally. That can only be done by taking difficult and painful decisions - about public expenditure, the transfer of resources out of the public and into the private sector, deregulation and freeing the economy to operate in a more efficient manner. The results in the past few years have been dramatic. But it was a painful and difficult process and one had to risk a lot of unpopularity to get the right results.

Q20. Is there a brand of Thatcherism that might be applied with the same measures of success in a developing country like South Africa, or in the rest of Africa for that matter?

Of course policies of this kind can be applied in South Africa and in other countries. I note that your Government has been stating its commitment to privatisation and deregulation and I welcome that. But deregulation will entail getting rid of a good many regulations which stem directly from the apartheid system. I believe that you must set free your economy if you are to get back to sustained economic growth and that can only be done by moving ahead with political reform.

#### PROFILE

Q21. On a more personal note: would you mind telling us more about your job, what you regard as the most difficult time of your career (and how you dealt with it) and your biggest single achievement? And perhaps most important of all, whether you like what you are doing and for how long you intend going on doing it?