

PRIME MINISTER

BILATERAL WITH THE FOREIGN SECRETARY

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You have a bilateral with the Foreign Secretary tomorrow afternoon. Points he wants to raise are as follows:-

- Commonwealth Secretary General

Ramphal is angling to stay on and is likely to ask to see you to enlist your support. The Foreign Secretary is opposed to renewal and I am sure this is right. But I think he will be urging that we support Anayoku instead. Although a nice man and undisputably better than Malcolm Fraser, I wonder whether he has the stature. We have to keep in mind the risks to our relations with Nigeria if we seem to be actively opposing him. The best outcome would be for some other and better candidate to emerge, although none is in sight at present. Unfortunately Obasanjo's candidature is blocked by Anayoku who has the support of the Nigerian Government.

- Visit to Southern Africa

I think the Foreign Secretary will crack and agree to a visit to Namibia. We need to get Robin Renwick involved in the planning as soon as possible. You will also need to speak to Pik Botha when he comes to ensure that the South African Government do not try to exploit the visit for their own ends.

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- Iran

The Iranians have voted to break off relations with us altogether unless, within a week, we see the error of our ways and repudiate utterly Rushdie's attack on Islam. Obviously we cannot accept an ultimatum on this. Equally, we do think Rushdie's book ill-judged and provocative and have said so publicly. It ought, therefore, to be possible to point to statements we have made before the Iranian ultimatum to show that we disapprove of Rushdie's blasphemy while being absolutely resolute in defence of free speech.

- Conventional force negotiations

I understand that some progress has been made towards resolving the Turkish problem but not yet enough.

- Cyprus

The Foreign Secretary will want to hear how you got on with President Vassiliou at lunch. He will be seeing him later in the day.

You may like to comment that Ewen Fergusson is clearly doing very well in Paris and should stay until the end of the British presidency in the second half of 1992.

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C.D.P.

Charles Powell

28 February 1989