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JAI AC2

10 DOWNING STREET

14 November 1985

*From the Private Secretary*

Robert Adley MP came to see the Prime Minister today to discuss South Africa following the outcome of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. Mr Adley was concerned that the Government was sending the wrong signals both to the black and white population of South Africa. His recent visit to South Africa had convinced him that the Government there had no idea of what was going on in the black community: it was his experience that practically the whole of the non-white population supported the political objectives if not the violent methods of the African National Congress. The white population believed that, however wrongly, the British Government would effectively support them; the black population believed that the British Government would do anything to obstruct the end of apartheid. Mr Adley suggested therefore that while not adopting sanctions which he believed to be an irrelevance, the British Government should find a way of changing the signals which it sent to South Africa. The best way of doing so and of encouraging the dialogue which was the last chance for possible change in South Africa would be to talk to the ANC. He recognised that this would be difficult for the Government but if the ANC had resorted to violence it was because they had no other outlet for their political aspirations.

The Prime Minister said that she needed no convincing about the evils of apartheid but equally she needed no convincing about the evils of violence. She had been appalled by the recent pronouncements of Mr Tambo. She was glad that Mr Adley was against sanctions and indeed sanctions were nothing like as popular in practice as other Governments sometimes claimed. That had been apparent at CHOGM where she had been expected to fight other peoples battles for them. There was a real problem about how to encourage the South African Government towards the dismantling of apartheid. She believed that significant changes had taken place this year. Nevertheless she would reflect on what Mr Adley had said.

(Timothy Flesher)

Colin Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

to

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE  
LONDON SW1H 9AT

4 NOV 1985

*Dear Sir,* *Gr prs frs*

Thank you for your letter of 18 October enclosing copies of correspondence between the Prime Minister and Robert Adley MP, who proposes withdrawing citizenship from 'British' South Africans unless they force progress in South Africa.

... I enclose a draft reply which the Prime Minister may care to send to Mr Adley.

*Yours ever*  
*Clare*

MS CLARE PELHAM

Timothy Flesher Esq

**DRAFT LETTER**

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE .....

TO	ENCLOSURES	COPIES TO BE SENT TO
Robert Adley Esq MP House of Commons LONDON SW1A 0AA		<div data-bbox="1106 577 1288 758" style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;">91</div> <div data-bbox="1354 758 1503 854" style="font-family: cursive; font-size: 2em; margin-top: 10px;">SLH</div>
(FULL POSTAL ADDRESS)		(FULL ADDRESSES, IF NECESSARY)

LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY ..... Prime Minister  
 (NAME OF SIGNATORY)

Thank you for your further letter of 17 October in which you asked for a response to your earlier suggestion about withdrawing the right of entry to this country from British citizens living in South Africa.

As you may know, under our immigration laws a person with the right of abode in the United Kingdom is free to live here, and to come and go without let or hindrance. It is also part of our immigration law that a British citizen has the right of abode in the United Kingdom. I would imagine that many British citizens living in South Africa acquired that citizenship either through birth in this country or descent from a parent qualified to pass on our citizenship in that way. But even if I could be persuaded that the action you propose would achieve the effect you describe, it would be contrary to our principles and long established traditions to seek powers to withdraw our citizenship from people in these circumstances. There are powers of deprivation of citizenship in section 40 of the British Nationality Act 1981, but they do not extend to those who have acquired British citizenship by birth or by descent.