

SOUTHERN AFRICA

PS (2)
PS/MRS CHALKER.

MR CLG MALLABY, CABINET OFFICE

PS/PUS

PS/NO 10 DOWNING STREET

~~MR FERGUSSON~~

SIR J FREELAND

~~MR JOHNSON~~

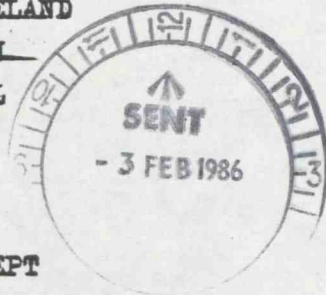
MR O'NEILL

HD/SAFD

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HD/NEWS DEPT

~~RESIDENT CLERK~~

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15.11.84

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

FM CAPETOWN

TO DESKBY 031130Z FCO

TELNO 071

OF 031000Z FEBRUARY 86

INFO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY)

MY TELS NO 68 TO 70:

PRESIDENTS SPEECH TO PARLIAMENT

SUMMARY

1. SOME FURTHER REFLECTIONS ON THE SPEECH. IT WAS GOOD BUT STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH. WE SHOULD GIVE SOME CREDIT FOR MOVEMENT BUT UNDERLINE THE NEED TO MAKE UP FOR LOST GROUND IN ESTABLISHING A CLIMATE FOR DIALOGUE.

DETAIL

2. REACTIONS FROM BLACK LEADERS HAVE BEEN PREDICTABLE. MANY BLACKS INCLUDING THE UDF ARE DISMISSIVE, HOMELAND LEADERS MOSTLY SUPPORTIVE. BUTHELEZI WHILE COMMENDING THE POSITIVE CHARACTER OF THE SPEECH SAYS HE WANTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROPOSED NEW COUNCIL BEFORE COMMITTING HIMSELF TO IT.

3. THE TONE OF THE SPEECH WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE POSITIVE THAN PREVIOUS ONES, AND THE GOVERNMENT HAVE GONE TO TOWN IN THEIR EFFORTS TO SELL IT TO THE BLACKS THROUGH TELEVISION AND THE PREDSS AS A QUICKENING OF THE PACE OF REFORM. IT IS THE BEST WE HAVE YET HEARD FROM THE GOVERNMENT. NEVERTHELESS, SUCH IS THE LACK OF CREDIBILITY BUILT UP OVER THE YEARS, IT STILL CLEARLY FALLS SHORT OF PRESUADING A MAJORITY OF BLACKS THAT THEY HAVE AN OFFER WORTH TAKING UP.

4. THE PROPOSAL FOR A NATIONAL STATUTORY COUNCIL TO INCLUDE BLACKS IS LIKELY TO BE A CRITICAL TEST. THE GOVERNMENT INSIST IT IS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS INSTITUTIONALISED POWER SHARING. THE TROUBLE IS THAT IT MAY NEVER GET OFF THE GROUND EXCEPT WITH BLACKS ALREADY

THAT IT MAY NEVER GET OFF THE GROUND EXCEPT WITH BLACKS ALREADY COMMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENT. NOT EVEN THE SWIFT PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION ON ITEMS PROMISED BY THE PRESIDENT WOULD PROBABLY BE ENOUGH TO OVERCOME THE MISGIVINGS OF MOST BLACKS. THE GULF IS TOO WIDE AND THE SPEECH DID NOTHING TO REMOVE THE BARRIERS SUCH AS THE STATE OF EMERGENCY AND DETENTIONS.

5. WE THEREFORE NEED TO DECIDE WHETHER IN OUR PUBLIC REACTION TO STRESS THE WIDTH OF THE GAP OR THE FACT THAT IT IS CLOSING. THE INITIAL REACTION BY NEWS DEPARTMENT (YOUR TELNO 41) SEEMS TO ME JUST RIGHT. WE MUST MAKE IT CLEAR THAT WE WELCOME POSITIVE ELEMENTS BUT THAT THE ONUS IS STILL ON THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE FURTHER STEPS. WE SHOULD BE VERY CAUTIOUS IN ANYTHING WE SAY ABOUT THE PROPOSED STATUTORY COUNCIL. THE KEY SHOULD BE HOW THE BLACKS REACT.

6. I SUGGEST THE MAIN POINTS TO STRESS SHOULD BE:

(A) WE CAN WELCOME WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE STRONGEST INDICATION TO DATE THAT THERE IS TO BE REAL CHANGE.

(B) WE ARE KEEN THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD GIVE THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE EFFECT TO ITS PROPOSALS FOR LEGISLATIVE REFORM.

(C) THE KEY TEST WILL BE WHETHER THE BLACKS THEMSELVES APPROVE OF THE LATEST PROPOSALS.

(D) WE FULLY AGREE WITH PRESIDENT BOTHA WHEN HE SAYS (IN A SIGNED NEWSPAPER STATEMENT) THAT THERE IS FURTHER TO GO, IN OUR VIEW MUCH FURTHER.

(E) THERE MUST BE SUFFICIENT CONFIDENCE ON BOTH SIDES FOR BLACKS TO BE BROUGHT INTO PROCESS OF CONSULTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

(F) EVERY EFFORT SHOULD THEREFORE BE MADE E.G. THROUGH LIFTING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY AND RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS TO ESTABLISH A CLIMATE OF CONFIDENCE IN WHICH GENUINE DIALOGUE IS POSSIBLE.

7. I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE PRESIDENT'S OFFER ON MANDELA SHOULD BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY AND IS NOT JUST A PROPAGANDA PLOY. REPORTS ABOUT SCHARANSKY BEING RELEASED ADD CREDENCE TO IT. THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT'S REJECTION OF A LINKED RELEASE WAS PERHAPS PREDICTABLE BUT KEEPS OPEN THE IDEA OF A PRISONER EXCHANGE. THERE IS CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WOULD LIKE TO FIND A WAY OF RELEASING MANDELA WITHOUT APPEARING TO GO BACK ON THEIR PREVIOUS CONDITIONS. TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE EMPHASIS IN THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH ON HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS THIS SUGGESTS TO ME THAT THEY MIGHT BE PREPARED TO SETTLE FOR SOMETHING LIKE A STRAIGHT PRISONER SWOP WITH ANGOLA IN ORDER TO JUSTIFY A DECISION TO RELEASE MANDELA WITHOUT FURTHER ADO.

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GRS 410

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FM CAPE TOWN
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 072
OF 031030Z FEBRUARY 86
INFO PRIORITY LUSAKA, JOHANNESBURG
INFO SAVING CAPE TOWN CONSULATE

MIPT : LOCAL REACTIONS TO PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

SUMMARY

1. REACTION TO THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH HAS BEEN MIXED. IT HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY UNY REPRESENTATIVES OF INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND BANKING, BY THE COLOURED AND INDIAN LEADERS IN PARLIAMENT AND BY SOME BLACK HOMELAND LEADERS. BUT OTHER BLACKS HAVE EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT.

DETAIL

BUSINESS VIEWS

2. BUSINESS LEADERS AND CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE HAVE WELCOMED THE POSITIVE POINTS IN THE SPEECH. THE FEDERATED CHAMBER OF INDUSTRY WELCOMED IN PARTICULAR THE UNAMBIGUOUS STATEMENT OF UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED PRINCIPLES, THE ASSOCIATED CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PROMISED ASSISTANCE IN FACILITATING REFORM AND WELCOMED THE BASIC THRUST OF THE SPEECH BUT ADDED THAT THERE WERE ASPECTS INCLUDING THE PROPOSED NEW STATUTORY COUNCIL THAT NEEDED CLARIFICATION.

PFP COMMENTS

3. DR SLABBERT, THE LEADER OF THE PFP, HAS COMMENTED THAT HE HAD FOUND THE PRESIDENTS REMARKS PLEASING TO THE EAR BUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES AND LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME HAD YET TO GIVE THEM SUBSTANCE.

RIGHT WING VIEWS

4. RIGHT WING REACTIONS HAVE BEEN CRITICAL. DR TREURNICHT COMMENTED THAT MR BOTHA HAD GIVEN NO EFFECTIVE PROTECTION FOR GROUP RIGHTS AND NO GUARANTEE AGAINST DOMINATION, THE HNP COMMENTED THAT THE SPEECH WAS IN EFFECT MOVING TOWARDS A SYSTEM OF ONE MAN - ONE VOTE.

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COLOURED AND INDIAN PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS

5. THE REV ALLAN HENDRICKSE, THE LEADER OF THE LABOUR PARTY, COMMENTED THAT MR BOTHA'S SPEECH SHOULD BE VIEWED AS A DECLARATION OF INTENT AND MR RAJBANSI, THE LEADER OF THE NPP, THAT THE OVERALL TONE OF THE SPEECH WAS GOOD.

BLACK REACTIONS

6. A STATEMENT BY THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT COMMENTED THAT WHILE THE SPEECH WAS REplete WITH INTENTIONS THE NATIONAL PARTY DOES NOT LEND ITSELF TO TRUST AND THAT THE STATE PRESIDENT HAD FAILED TO PROVIDE A REAL SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS HIS GOVERNMENT HAD CREATED.

7. BISHOP TUTU HAD COMMENTED THAT THERE WAS LITTLE IN THE SPEECH THAT WE HAD NOT HEARD BEFORE AND THAT IT HAD CONTAINED POINT SCORING RATHER THAN A DRAMATIC EXAMPLE OF STATESMANSHIP.

8. CHIEF BUTHELEZI HAD RESPONDED CAUTIOUSLY PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE PRESIDENT'S COURAGE BUT ADDED THAT HE HAD CREATED CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH HE MUST NOW EITHER BE SEEN AS A STATESMAN OR AN AFRIKANER POLITICIAN INCAPABLE OF RISING TO MEET THE DEMAND OF HISTORY.

HE SAID THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT THE PROPOSED ADVISORY COUNCIL UNTIL HE HAD ASSESSED THE PROSPECTS OF THE COUNCIL SUCCEEDING. HE ADDED THAT IF THE COUNCIL'S DELIBERATIONS WERE GOING TO BE BEHIND CLOSED DOORS THEN ITS PROCEEDINGS WOULD BE STERILE. HE SAID HE WAS DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED THAT THE STATE PRESIDENT HAD NOT ANNOUNCED THE RELEASE OF NELSON MANDELA. OTHER LEADERS HAVE ECHOED THIS VIEW.

COMMENT

9. MAJORITY BLACK OPINION WILL NOT BE WON ROUND TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT AS JUST A RESULT OF THE SPEECH. TOO MUCH IS LEFT UNCERTAIN. THE DEAN OF VENDA HAS GIVEN US A USEFUL ACCOUNT OF BLACK REACTIONS (MIFT).

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STANDARD (PALACE)

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