

SUBJECT CC MASTER

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

POINTS MADE BY SIR LAURENS VAN DER POST

Sir Laurens called on the Prime Minister on the evening of 22 June.

2. Sir Laurens stressed the danger of a moderate backlash in South Africa. Moderate opinion was being driven into the intransigent camp by pressure from outside South Africa and the failure of world opinion to give any credit for the reforms which were taking place in South Africa. There was a growing feeling that nothing would satisfy world opinion except total surrender by the whites. There was not the slightest chance of this.

3. Sir Laurens believed that there was still a reasonable prospect of bringing about the release of Nelson Mandela. At least three Ministers in the South African Government were working for this. He mentioned in particular the Chairman of the President's Council, Mr. Koornhoff.

4. Sir Laurens said that Chief Buthelezi was anxious to sort out his problems with the ANC. He wanted to draw the ANC leadership back into South Africa because he believed that they would rapidly be shown to be irrelevant and out of touch. He trailed the idea of a secret meeting between Buthelezi and Tambo in London, which HMG might help arrange. The Prime Minister pointed to the difficulties of preserving secrecy over such an encounter.

5. Sir Laurens stressed that some way had to be found to organise a Constitutional Convention to discuss South Africa's future. The ANC would be only one party among many at such a Convention. He wondered whether some preliminary encounters might not be organised outside South Africa. It would help to have the support and understanding of the international community for such an approach. This might be an issue on which the European Council could take a helpful position.

6. Sir Laurens argued the immorality of sanctions. Blacks in South Africa did not want sanctions whatever the ANC and Bishop Tutu might say. If they wanted to see the South African economy damaged, they had the power to do it themselves by strikes and boycotts.

7. Sir Laurens referred to the new Army Chief of Staff, General Geldenhuis as a relatively moderate and sensible man who should be cultivated.

C.D.P.

CHARLES POWELL

23 June 1986

SRWAEZ

File

DA

1. Mr. Powell
2. Prime Minister

SIR LAURENS VAN DER POST

Laurens is back from South Africa and would like to come to de-brief. He goes to his house in Aldeburgh on Monday 23 June.

BF //

Would it be convenient for him to come in at say 1800 on Sunday 22 June prior to your supper with Ian and Joan Gow?

Caroline Ryder
12 June 1986