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FM WHITE HOUSE
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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T114A/86

SECRET VIA CABINET OFFICE CHANNELS EYES ONLY WHO3665

PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO CHARLES POWELL FROM ADMIRAL JOHN POINDEXTER NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT

FOR CHARLES POWELL EYES ONLY

I AM FORWARDING THE PRESIDENTS RESPONSE TO PRIME MINISTER THATCHERS PERSONAL LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT, DATED JUNE 20, CONCERNING SOUTH AFRICA. INFORMATION ABOUT THIS LETTER HAS BEEN HIGHLY RESTRICTED AND HAS REMAINED TOTALLY WITHIN THE WHITE HOUSE.

TWO OF MY SENIOR STAFF OFFICERS, WALTER RAYMOND AND PHIL RINGDAHL, WILL BE TRAVELING TO THE U.K. AND WILL BE IN LONDON JUNE 24-26. THEY HAVE BEEN INVITED BY IAN MACGREGOR TO COME FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF MEETING WITH SEVERAL KEY SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSMEN, INCLUDING GAVIN RELLY AND ANTON RUPPERT. THE PURPOSE WILL BE TO EXPLORE POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS IN SOUTH AFRICA WHICH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY JUDGES MAY HELP GENERATE CHANGE BOTH IN TERMS OF EFFECTIVE PRESSURE AND DIALOGUE. THIS MEETING HAS ONLY A U.S. - SOUTH AFRICA DIMENSION AT THIS STAGE, BUT WE REALIZE THAT IF USEFUL IDEAS ARE PUT FORWARD COORDINATION WITH U.K. AND OTHER BUSINESS SECTORS WILL BE IMPORTANT AND NECESSARY.

IT OCCURS TO ME THAT IF YOU WOULD WISH TO EXPAND FURTHER ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER YOU MAY WANT TO AVAIL YOURSELF OF THE PRESENCE OF MY OFFICERS TO EXPLORE CERTAIN AVENUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST. THESE OFFICERS ARE AWARE OF THE DIALOGUE AND HAVE MY FULL CONFIDENCE.

MESSAGES BEGINS:

DEAR MARGARET,

I WAS PLEASED TO RECEIVE YOUR MESSAGE OF JUNE 20, AND TO BE INFORMED OF YOUR VIEWS REGARDING SOUTH AFRICA. I TOO SEE THE BENEFITS FROM THE EMINENT PERSONS APPROACH, AND AGREE, AS YOU SUGGEST, THAT WE MUST CONTINUE THE SEARCH TO BRING THE PARTIES TOGETHER IN NEGOTIATION. I REALIZE THIS IS A MOST DIFFICULT STEP WHICH WILL REQUIRE OUR BEST EFFORTS AND IMAGINATION IF WE ARE TO BREAK THE DEADLOCK.

YOU ASKED THAT I SPEAK FRANKLY AND I SHALL DO SO. I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO ACT QUICKLY BECAUSE THE TIME AVAILABLE TO US MAY BE

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LIMITED, BOTH IN OUR ABILITY TO PUT ASIDE OUR RESPECTIVE PRESSURES FOR PUNITIVE, DESTRUCTIVE SANCTIONS, AND IN TURNING AROUND THE DETERIORATING SITUATION INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA. AS YOU, I REMAIN OPPOSED TO PUNITIVE SANCTIONS WHICH WILL ONLY POLARIZE THE SITUATION THERE AND DO THE MOST HARM TO BLACKS. CONTRARY TO SOME NEWS REPORTS, I AM NOT CONSIDERING ANY LIMITED MEASURES AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. YOU NOTED YOU MAY BE FORCED TO ACCEPT SOME MODEST STEPS WITHIN THE EUROPEAN AND COMMONWEALTH CONTEXTS TO SIGNAL YOUR OPPOSITION TO APARTHEID, AND IN ALL FRANKNESS, WE MAY BE FACED WITH THE SAME SITUATION IF THE CONGRESS, AS EXPECTED, PASSES SOME SANCTIONS BILL LATER THIS SUMMER OR FALL. ALSO, THE EXECUTIVE ORDER I SIGNED LAST YEAR CONCERNING SOUTH AFRICA WILL BE EXPIRING IN SEPTEMBER 1986, AND I SHALL BE MAKING A DECISION ON CANCELLATION OR EXTENSION OF THOSE VARIOUS E.O. MEASURES. AS OUR SITUATION DEVELOPS, I WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF WHAT WE ARE PLANNING.

I ACCEPT YOUR SUGGESTION OF STAYING CLOSELY TOGETHER ON THIS ISSUE, AND OF THE IMPORTANCE OF HOLDING THE LINE TOGETHER. EACH OF US ACTING UNILATERALLY WILL ONLY DILUTE OUR INFLUENCE AND POTENTIAL EFFECTIVENESS. IN THIS VEIN, I WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN YOUR VIEWS ON WHAT WE MIGHT CONSIDER COLLECTIVELY WITH OTHER COUNTRIES WHO PRETORIA RESPECTS AND WHO HAVE THE GREATER ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL COMMITMENT -- THE U.K., U.S., THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC, AND POSSIBLY FRANCE. THESE COUNTRIES HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF BRINGING PRETORIA INTO MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS, IF WE ADOPT A COORDINATED STRATEGY INVOLVING OUR GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS SECTORS. I UNDERSTAND CHANCELLOR KOHL ONLY RECENTLY SPOKE IN FAVOR OF A SIMILAR APPROACH INVOLVING THE FOUR GOVERNMENTS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE BOTHA GOVERNMENT TRULY UNDERSTAND OUR DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL, AND THE TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES THAT COULD RESULT FROM THAT GOVERNMENTS TEMPTATION TO DROP A CURTAIN AROUND ITSELF.

I AGREE WITH YOUR POINT THAT THE MOST CONSTRUCTIVE THINGS THAT COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED IN YOUR EUROPEAN MEETING THIS WEEK ARE POSITIVE MEASURES TO HELP SOUTH AFRICAN BLACKS. I WOULD HOPE MEASURES AIMED AT UNDERMINING SOUTH AFRICAS ECONOMY COULD BE AVOIDED. BECAUSE OF THE ALREADY FIXED VIEW OF SOME OF YOUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS IN FAVOR OF STRONGLY PUNITIVE STEPS, I DO NOT BELIEVE THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE COULD MOVE IN THE POSITIVE WAY WE SEEK. I AM CONVINCED HARSH ACTIONS WOULD ONLY TEND TO INCREASE PRETORIAS INCLINATION TO RETREAT FURTHER.

I WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR VIEWS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR CARRYING ANY AGREED UPON IDEAS FORWARD.

WITH WARM REGARDS,
/S/ RON
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