

16th July, 1986

May I recap briefly on what I said to you after the Foreign Affairs committee yesterday afternoon.

We have got ourselves rather committed to the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC.

If I read the texts aright this is going further than the Eminent Persons who made the release and unbanning conditional on the suspension of violence.

I would judge that this must be very difficult for President Botha partly because it would be seen to be giving in to external pressure; even more because it would virtually nominate the ANC as his opposite numbers in the dialogue you and he want to bring about.

Is there a way of squaring this rather difficult circle?

Buthlezi has said in public that he could not join the President's proposed Council unless Mandela was released. But might there not be advantage in reversing this process? Would it not strengthen Buthelezi hand and Botha's hand if the two were to come together first, whether in the Council, the Cabinet or wherever and then together offer Mandela his freedom and the unbanning of the ANC under such emergency laws as Botha and Buthelezi thought necessary? Whites and Zulus would then be playing from strength and making it clear that the ANC was only one element in a dialogue.

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I don't know how quickly this could be brought about but if you were assured by both Botha and Buthelezi that it was on the way your mission could still be crowned with success.

✓ I am copying this to Margaret Thatcher.

Julian Amery

The Rt. Hon. Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC., MP

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Confidential

16th July, 1986

Prime Minister
CDP
16/7

Dear Margaret,

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I think perhaps you should see personally the enclosed ploy which I have suggested to Geoffrey Howe.

In care,

Julian Amery

Julian Amery

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, MP