

Master

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JPB/cac

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Mrs M. Thatcher,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London W1

Dear Mrs Thatcher,

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Thank you for your kind letter about the South African Schoolteacher Fellowships. I apologise for burdening you with another letter. I had not intended to write again, but with South Africa in the forefront of public attention I feel frustrated by the generally negative approach that is advocated, and so I hope you will be prepared to consider a further and much larger proposal from me. The proposal is made in the spirit of doing something positive for black South Africans in contrast to the negative approach of punitive economic sanctions.

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In broad terms my proposal is that we in Britain initiate a major development programme for black South Africans. Possibly the proposal could be extended to a Commonwealth or an EEC programme which would enable other members to make their contributions.

The type of programme I have in mind is as follows:

1. A joint initiative from the government, private industry, and public institutions.
2. The aim would be to help black South Africans (i.e. Africans, Coloureds, and Indians) in furthering the development of their country.
3. The programme would operate in South Africa and in Britain (or other Commonwealth and EEC countries if a broader international approach were adopted).
4. The programme would concentrate on such activities as:
 - a. Training and education;
 - b. Improvement and development works (e.g. the provision of water in urban and rural areas);
 - c. Improved work conditions and opportunities for blacks.
5. The training would include on the job experience, so that we might see black South Africans in this country behind the counters in Barclays, or on secondment to a local authority, or in ICI laboratories, or marketing oil for Shell. The courses to be offered would be very practical - e.g. computing, accountancy, engineering etc.

In fact many of these things are already being done, but with little public notice and not in a co-ordinated way. My proposal is that we should do more, and make it known what we are doing so that we can widen

the agenda of debate about South Africa. This would require a coordinating organization which would need government support, but would not be an exclusively government enterprise.

Do you think it worthwhile pursuing this proposal? If you do I should like the opportunity to discuss it further with you or some of your colleagues. Also if possible, I should like to make a contribution towards it.

Yours sincerely,

James Barber

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