

SUBJECT CC
MASTER



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

30 July 1986

SOUTH AFRICA

The Foreign Secretary reported to the Prime Minister earlier this afternoon on his recent visit to Southern Africa.

The Foreign Secretary said that he had presented the case for change through peaceful negotiation in South Africa as widely as possible to members of the Government as well as to representatives of all communities, and had stressed the need for early action on Mandela and the ANC if pressure for sanctions against South Africa was to be resisted. Unfortunately his final meeting with President Botha and the latter's subsequent press conference - of which we had not been told in advance - had been very unsatisfactory and damaging. Botha had been defiant, ill-mannered and truculent. He had not been prepared to give any credit at all to the United Kingdom or the United States for their attempts to work for peaceful change. Rather he had accused the Foreign Secretary at one point of forcing the pace on sanctions. A number of South African ministers were more open-minded and would probably like to accept the propositions which he had put forward although they were anxious about embarking on discussions with the ANC without knowing where they would lead. They were aware of the distortion of the South African economy which had resulted from sanctions already imposed, and the economic penalties caused by South Africa's growing isolation. But although President Botha seemed increasingly isolated and reclusive, there seemed to be no way round him. In consequence, the prospects of any early progress were very bleak.

The Foreign Secretary continued that in his contacts with black leaders, he had found that none of them were willing to take part in discussions with the South African government without Mandela's participation. At the least he must be free to exercise the option to take part.

The Foreign Secretary said that he could not now recommend that he pay a further visit to South Africa in September, although we should leave open the possibility of such a visit if developments at the Nationalist Party Conference and the special session of the South African Parliament in August were, against his expectations, to

warrant it. In effect there was no point in his going back unless we received the plainest possible indication that what we wanted would be forthcoming. At the same time we should go on pressing the ANC and other black representatives to put forward proposals of their own in a form designed to exert the maximum pressure on the South African government.

The Foreign Secretary said that he had reached the view that continuous pressure applied in measured fashion from outside could contribute to change in South Africa. He believed that we should be ready to translate the commitments on further measures which we had accepted at Nassau and at the European Council into action. It was clear that the United States was likely to take additional measures very shortly. We should therefore be ready to say at the Commonwealth Review Conference that, if there had been no progress in South Africa towards meeting the Community's conditions by the end of September, we would recommend the adoption of the measures envisaged by the Hague European Council. Anything less would put our economic interests elsewhere in the Commonwealth at serious risk.

The Prime Minister said that the Foreign Secretary had done very well indeed on his mission and conducted himself with great dignity and patience, steadily putting to the South African government arguments which they had not chosen to hear or to heed. She recalled that we had not expected the mission to achieve great progress. It was inevitable President Botha would distance himself from any impression of reacting to external pressure. We should not rule out some movement in August. She remained extremely reluctant to envisage the adoption, let alone recommendation, of further economic measures since she was absolutely convinced that sanctions would not achieve internal change. Moreover the government's strong opposition to sanctions was receiving considerable support in the country. But we had agreed not to exclude further measures, as signals, at the end of the three month period if the EC as a whole was agreed upon them and other industrialised countries were equally committed to them. We should make clear at the Commonwealth meeting that we would stand by this commitment. But she would be reluctant to go further.

It was agreed to continue the discussion later.

(C. D. POWELL)

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

30 July 1986

From the Private Secretary

SOUTH AFRICA

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary continued their discussion of South Africa at a further bilateral meeting this afternoon.

The Foreign Secretary said that he would propose that we should make clear at the Commonwealth Review Conference that we were ready to take, in concert with other industrial powers, the measures foreshadowed in the European Council conclusions if the required steps had not been taken by the South African Government by the end of September. The Prime Minister stressed that this must be drafted in such a way to make clear that there was no automaticity. Chancellor Kohl had attached particular importance to this. The Foreign Secretary said that the drafting would be looked at carefully.

(CHARLES POWELL)

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