



70 WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AS

01-233 8319

From the Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service

Sir Robert Armstrong GCB CVO

Ref. A086/2216

31 July 1986

*Dear Tony,*South Africa

The minutes of today's discussion in Cabinet will record that the Cabinet endorsed OD's conclusions on the handling of the Commonwealth Review Meeting, but not what those conclusions were.

The conclusions as reported by the Prime Minister at and endorsed by the Cabinet were recorded as follows:

- a. The United Kingdom would not stand out against the implementation of the measures against South Africa identified by the European Council at their meeting at the end of June if, at the end of the three month period allowed for the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's European mission, the other members of the Community wished to impose them. The measures in question were a ban on new investment in South Africa, which in the case of the United Kingdom would have to be voluntary, and bans on the import from South Africa of coal, iron and steel, and gold coins.
- b. Since sanctions against South Africa would not promote progress there, any further measures adopted by the United Kingdom should be justified and presented clearly as a signal of our disapproval of apartheid. She would be in touch with the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Herr Helmut Kohl, about the possibility of the United Kingdom agreeing at the Commonwealth Review Meeting to adopt a voluntary ban on new investment in South Africa and a voluntary ban on the promotion of tourism to South Africa.
- c. The United Kingdom should seek to put an end to the "ratchet" process whereby each conference which discussed measures against South Africa ended with commitments to

A C Galsworthy Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

/consider

consider yet further measures at the next stage. It was desirable that there should be no commitment to consideration of further measures in the Commonwealth.

d. Members of the Commonwealth relied on British development aid and on British support in negotiations about their financial difficulties in the International Monetary Fund. It would be important that other participants in the Commonwealth Review Meeting should be aware that public opinion in this country could require the Government to reconsider such support if countries which benefited from it acted against the United Kingdom in connection with South Africa.

e. The concept of progress by negotiation which the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary had advocated during his visit to Southern Africa was the most hopeful basis for positive change, and should be kept in being, in the hope that discussion of it could resume in due course.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Charles Powell.

Yours ever

Robert Armstrong

