



PLEASE
F.P.
M

Mr Powell,

With the compliments of

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

In case you have
not seen

PP Cyn Parker.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

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FM FCOLN TO CAPEM
191530Z FEB 87
GRS 411

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DEDIP
FM FCO
TO IMMEDIATE CAPE TOWN (PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADOR)
TELNO 42
OF 191530Z FEBRUARY 87

OUR TELNOS 5 AND 7: SECRETARY OF STATE'S REPLY TO PIK BOTHA'S
MESSAGE

1. PLEASE PASS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE FOLLOWING REPLY DATED
19 FEBRUARY FROM ME TO PIK BOTHA. SIGNED ORIGINAL FOLLOWS BY BAG.

TEXT BEGINS:

DEAR PIK

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF 6 JANUARY ABOUT THE BRITISH
GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF SOUTH AFRICA AND, IN
PARTICULAR, TO THE IDEA OF MATCHING COMMITMENTS.

YOU ARE RIGHT TO RECALL OUR SUPPORT FOR THE IDEAS PUT FORWARD BY
THE EPG IN THEIR NEGOTIATING CONCEPT. THIS WAS THE STRATEGY
WHICH UNDERLAY THE FORMULA I DISCUSSED WITH YOU LAST SUMMER. WE
CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT MATCHING COMMITMENTS OFFER THE MOST
PROMISING PATH TO PEACEFUL DIALOGUE.
BUT MUCH HAS HAPPENED IN SOUTH AFRICA SINCE WE MET LAST JULY. MY
PRESENT IMPRESSION IS THAT NO NEGOTIATING FORMULA, HOWEVER

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SKILFULLY BALANCED, STANDS A REALISTIC CHANCE OF MAKING PROGRESS UNLESS AND UNTIL A NEW CLIMATE FAVOURABLE TO NEGOTIATION HAS BEEN CREATED. AND THE CRUCIAL ROLE IN CREATING THAT CLIMATE MUST REST, OF COURSE, WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT.

MOREOVER, AS I EMPHASISED WHEN WE LAST TALKED IN PRETORIA, THERE IS A REAL RISK THAT PRESSING THE IDEA OF MATCHING COMMITMENTS FROM THE WRONG STABLE WOULD IN ITSELF BE LIKELY TO PREVENT IT GAINING GROUND. YOU YOURSELF SAID IN YOUR PRESS CONFERENCE ON 3 FEBRUARY THAT THE EUROPEANS WOULD NOT SOLVE SOUTH AFRICA'S PROBLEMS.

NEVERTHELESS, GIVEN REAL EVIDENCE OF READINESS ON THE PART OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO TAKE THE STEPS WHICH WE HAVE SO LONG BEEN URGING ON YOU, I BELIEVE THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WOULD BE PREPARED TO PLAY THEIR PART IN GETTING DIALOGUE GOING. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD CERTAINLY BE READY TO DO SO. BUT THE ONUS LIES WITH YOU: IT IS NOT THE BRITISH NOR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT WHOM YOU HAVE TO CONVINCED OF YOUR INTENTIONS, BUT THOSE WITH WHOM YOU HAVE TO NEGOTIATE. UNLESS YOU ARE ABLE TO MAKE A START ON OVERCOMING THEIR SUSPICIONS, THERE IS LITTLE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CAN DO TO HELP. THERE IS NO NEED, I AM SURE, FOR ME TO REPEAT HOW SERIOUSLY AND DEEPLY WE HOPE THAT YOU AND YOUR COUNTRYMEN WILL FIND THE COURAGE TO TAKE THE IMMENSELY DIFFICULT DECISIONS THAT ARE CALLED FOR.

YOURS SINCERELY

GEOFFREY HOWE

TEXT ENDS
HOWE

LIMITED.

Ho. SAFO.

Ho. CAFD.

Ho. EAD.

Ho. WAD.

Ho. NEWS DEPT.

Ho. PUSD.

PS.

PS | MRS. CHALKER.

PS | PUS.

Mr. THOMAS.

Mr. FERGUSSON.

Mr. REEVE.

Mr. HOUSTON.