

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. 26A/87

Ottawa,
4 March 1987

SUBJECT
CC MASTER
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Dear Margaret,

This is just a short note to pass on my considered impressions, following my trip to Africa. The dominating focus of discussion during the visit was, not surprisingly, apartheid in South Africa and the implications of this struggle on neighbouring states. In Zimbabwe, I had the opportunity to meet with Prime Minister Mugabe, and Presidents Kaunda and Masire to discuss developments in South Africa and the region. In what were very frank discussions, both in private and public, I sensed a desire on their part for a continued Western effort to bring about a negotiated peaceful solution to the impasse in South Africa. However, there was a growing pessimism and frustration at the pace of change, increased repression, and the continuing intransigence of the Government of South Africa.

I took the occasion of the quadrilateral meeting in Victoria Falls between Prime Minister Mugabe, Presidents Kaunda and Masire and myself to publicly state that "all Western leaders, in my judgment, view apartheid as absolutely reprehensible, President Reagan to Mrs. Thatcher to whomever. Everyone shares this fundamental view". In Dakar, following a similar statement in Zimbabwe, I declared that "there is no doubt in my mind as to the commitment of both of those leaders against apartheid. They are as strongly against apartheid as anyone in this room". Throughout the visit, I reaffirmed the view expressed by the Eminent Persons Group that further violence on both sides would

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only damage the prospects for a peaceful negotiated solution.

I also stated the following in Dakar: "I believe, and I believe with greater intensity today, having had the benefit of first hand observation, that in the absence of economic pressure, the option of violence becomes more prominent and it is precisely that we are trying to avoid". Early progress is essential if an escalation of violence is to be avoided.

The most striking personal impression was the debilitating dependency of the economies of the Front Line States on South Africa. This is reflected in day-to-day life and the constant overwhelming security concerns relating to their economies. For our part, we intend to concentrate our development assistance through SADCC to assist in the reduction of these dependencies. Certainly, a key to economic survival among the Front Line States will be the transportation corridors running through Mozambique and I hope that particular attention will be focused by Western countries on rehabilitating these critical networks.

Also, in light of this dependency, I cautioned the FLS leaders on the imposition of sanctions on their own in an environment where economic alternatives have not been fully developed. The clear implication was that no one expected them to worsen their economic situations by a self-imposed timetable in imposing sanctions.

As for the situation in South Africa itself, the events of the last eight months have been anything but encouraging. One can only hope that following the May 6, 1987 general elections, a course will be defined which offers hope for sensible, progressive change at a pace which will bring about a peaceful, democratic

resolution of tensions both within South Africa and the region. Should a glimmer of light emanate from South Africa, I am concerned about the absence of an identifiable conduit or broker - a role played so usefully by the UK in the case of Rhodesia. If at some point, interest is expressed in serious discussions there will likely be a need to fill this vacuum and I hope Western Alliance leaders will be ready to assist.

With best regards,

(Sgd.) Brian

Brian Mulroney

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