

CCPC



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

3 June 1987

Dear Charles,

Thank you for your letter of 21 May enclosing a copy of a letter to M. Chirac covering a memorandum by Chief Buthelezi.

The memorandum reflects recent statements and addresses by Chief Buthelezi. In the course of his message to EC Foreign Ministers in August 1986 and his address to the Royal Commonwealth Society on 24 April, Chief Buthelezi has developed his ideas about what the international community could do to encourage the process of dialogue in South Africa. He starts from the proposition that sanctions are/would be disastrous, and that Western governments have not seriously addressed themselves to what could be done to bring some movement from the Pretoria Government. His memorandum to M. Chirac repeats the theme of his address to the Royal Commonwealth Society, that what is needed is shuttle diplomacy between foreign governments (possibly including Britain) who would adopt positions on behalf of the South African Government and ANC respectively, possibly serviced by a secretariat based in South Africa. Chief Buthelezi asks in his present memorandum whether such shuttle diplomacy would indeed be feasible given the lack of unanimity in the Twelve. But he argues that individual countries like France, FRG and Britain - perhaps with Portugal and Spain - might examine the viability of such an initiative with black South African leaders who espouse the politics of negotiation.

In other respects Chief Buthelezi's memorandum follows lines which are familiar to us. Chief Buthelezi argues that apartheid is on the point of extinction and is condemned to disappear without any sign of its having existed. How South Africa's blacks combat apartheid now, Chief Buthelezi believes, will determine the manner in which a future black-enfranchised South African state is run. He acknowledges that blacks have been unable to find a common voice in deciding what line they should take in fighting apartheid: he believes this is explainable but not excusable, and is the consequence of the South African Government's deliberate policy of "divide and rule". Chief Buthelezi claims a large role for himself and Inkatha, and condemns the ANC's revolutionary Marxism and hunger for power. Believing that an ANC victory would be at

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the cost of a "scorched earth" policy and would in any case be no more than a first step in a series of revolutionary events, Chief Buthelezi argues the case forcefully for reconciliation between blacks and whites as a prelude to negotiations. Maintenance of the South African economy in the course of the liberation struggle, he says, is as vital as the suppression of apartheid itself. Western governments have not, he claims, done enough to pressure the South African Government: Western governments who have adopted sanctions have done no more than washed their hands of the problem. Having sent their signals to the South African Government, Western governments should, Chief Buthelezi believes, now stop to realise that their policies are costing blacks jobs and exports. Accumulated diplomatic pressure can work, and it was wrong to expect initiatives like EPG, rather than on simply dismantling apartheid. But Chief Buthelezi stands by his stipulation that the release of Nelson Mandela is crucial. He comments that much remains to be done in giving humanitarian aid to the victims of apartheid; and finally he urges that the Indaba should be taken more seriously than it has been so far.

The Foreign Secretary considers that Chief Buthelezi's rejection of violence and wish for peaceful negotiation is to be warmly commended. However his ideas for a new international mediation initiative are unrealistic in the present climate in South Africa. The deep split between Chief Buthelezi and other black opposition groups also means that his proposals would be unlikely to gain wider black support. Furthermore, Chief Buthelezi's memorandum was written and presented to M. Chirac before the 6 May white election in South Africa. Chief Buthelezi reportedly described the result of that election as "appalling" and we do not know how his views may have altered as a result of it.

The Foreign Secretary considers that it would be right for the Prime Minister to send M. Chirac a short reply underlining the importance of black South African leaders, like Chief Buthelezi, seeking a non-violent solution to South Africa's problems.

Yours ever

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary