

Prime Minister

A message from
the Foreign Secretary,
sent to you on
the aircraft. cap?

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FM CABINET OFFICE
TO AIRBORNE 001 DESKBY 170100Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L
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FOLLOWING FROM SIR GEOFFREY HOWE FOR MR CHARLES POWELL

PRIME MINISTER
SOUTH AFRICA

1. I WILL BE LETTING YOU HAVE A GENERAL APPRAISAL OF HOW WE MIGHT HANDLE THE SOUTH AFRICA ISSUE IN THE RUN-UP TO THE VANCOUVER CHOGM. BUT THERE IS ONE POINT ON WHICH I HAD HOPED TO BE ABLE TO SHARE MY THOUGHTS WITH YOU BEFORE YOUR VISIT TO WASHINGTON.
2. IN SOUTH AFRICA ITSELF, THERE NOW SEEMS NO PROSPECT OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, CERTAINLY AS LONG AS P W BOTHA REMAINS IN PLACE. OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA, THERE IS A GROWING PERCEPTION THAT SANCTIONS ARE NOT THE ANSWER. BUT THE PRESSURE FOR THEM WILL NOT GO AWAY, LEAST OF ALL IN THE UNITED STATES AS THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS APPROACH. WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP THE LID ON SUCH PRESSURES AT VANCOUVER, PROVIDED NOTHING IS DONE TO STIR KENNETH KAUNDA AND ROBERT MUGABE OUT OF THEIR RELUCTANT ACQUIESCENCE IN THE PRESENT POSITION. WE MUST THEREFORE CONTINUE TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO GIVE IN OUR POSITION - BUT QUIETLY.
3. AS THE REALISATION THAT SANCTIONS ARE NOT THE ANSWER GROWS, PEOPLE ARE INCREASINGLY LOOKING FOR OTHER WAYS TO SHOW THEIR CONCERN. WE HAVE BEEN LEADING THE WAY WITH OUR EFFORTS, IN THE FMQXR F YNOMYORMFLSEWHERE, TO BOLSTER THE FRONT LINE STATES. THIS TIDE IS RUNNING OUR WAY, AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO.
4. BUT THERE IS A GROWING FEELING THAT, WITH THE SANCTIONS ROAD BLOCKED, ACTION IN SUPPORT OF FRONT LINE STATES IS NOT ENOUGH. HENCE THE PRESSURE FOR SOME KIND OF DECLARATION OF THE KIND PROMOTED BOTH BY THE U.S. AND BY OUR PARTNERS IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. WE HAVE DISCOURAGED STATEMENTS OF THIS KIND. IN THE TWELVE, WE HAVE SO FAR HELD OUT SUCCESSFULLY.
5. THE AMERICANS, WHO APPEAR INCREASINGLY TO REGARD THE IDEA OF A DECLARATION AS A HARMLESS DEVICE TO DEFUSE PRESSURE, STRIKE ME AS MORE AND MORE LIKELY TO PRODUCE ONE UNILATERALLY AFTER THE SUMMER BREAK, BEFORE THE PRESIDENT HAS TO REPORT TO CONGRESS ON THIS SUBJECT. AMONG THE TWELVE, THE GERMANS HAVE GIVEN UP ANY PRETENCE OF ARGUING AGAINST A EUROPEAN DECLARATION, AND ARE NOW ACTIVELY PRESSING FOR ONE. AT THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN COPENHAGEN ON MONDAY, ONLY PORTUGAL GAVE ME ANY SUPPORT IN HOLDING OUT AGAINST CALLS TO GO AHEAD WITH A DECLARATION.
6. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND I HAVE LOOKED AGAIN CAREFULLY AT THE ENCLOSED TEXT WHICH THE DUTCH HAVE PROMOTED AMONG THE TWELVE. I DOUBT IF IT WOULD HAVE MUCH IMPACT IN SOUTH AFRICA: BUT I AM PRETTY CLEAR THAT NEITHER IT, NOR FOR THAT MATTER THE AMERICAN TEXT, WOULD DO ANY HARM EITHER. IT GOES LESS FAR THAN PAST STATEMENTS WE HAVE AGREED AT CHOGM OR IN THE TWELVE, AND IT FORECLOSES NO OPTIONS. ON THE CONTRARY, IT HAS SOME FRESH ELEMENTS CALCULATED TO REASSURE THE WHITES. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT OUR ACQUIESCENCE IN SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD UNDERMINE SUCH INFLUENCE AS WE MAY HAVE OVER THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT.
7. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES I AM BECOMING CONVINCED THAT IT WILL NOT SERVE OUR INTERESTS TO CONTINUE TO OPPOSE THE ISSUE OF THE STATEMENT INDEFINITELY: INCREASINGLY WELL-PUBLISHED OPPOSITION, ESPECIALLY IN ISOLATION, COULD SERVE ONLY TO AROUSE EMOTIONS AND CAUSE US PROBLEMS WHICH THE DECLARATION ITSELF WILL NOT. THUS, I AM COMING TO BELIEVE THAT THE ISSUE OF THE DECLARATION, AT THE RIGHT MOMENT, COULD ACTUALLY STRENGTHEN THE OVERALL POSITION WE WILL WANT TO MAINTAIN AT VANCOUVER.
8. I SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF YOUR INITIAL REACTION TO THIS POINT IS LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC EXCLAM. IT HAS ONLY BEGUN TO STRIKE ME AS VALID AFTER SOME MONTHS OF ARGUING THE CONTRARY: BUT I DO NOW SEE IT IN THE WAY THAT HAVE DESCRIBE. OBVIOUSLY WE SHOULD WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT. I TROUBLE YOU WITH IT NOW ONLY BECAUSE YOU MAY WISH TO BEAR IT IN MIND IN YOUR DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN. I THINK WE NEED TO KEEP OUR OPTIONS OPEN.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

TEXT OF A POSSIBLE (LAST WORD UNDERLINED) DECLARATION BY THE TWELVE ON SOUTH AFRICA AS AGREED BY THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE ON 3/9 APRIL 1987

I) APARTHEID IS UNACCEPTABLE. IT ENDANGERS STABILITY BOTH IN SOUTH AFRICA ITSELF AND IN THE REGION AS A WHOLE. ITS PROLONGATION WILL ONLY WEAKEN THE FORCES OF MODERATION AND DIMINISH THE PROSPECTS FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. THE TWELVE HAVE REPEATEDLY CONDEMNED APARTHEID IN ALL ITS FORMS AND CONTINUE TO SEEK ITS ABOLITION THROUGH A PROCESS OF PEACEFUL CHANGE. THERE IS AN URGENT NEED TO BREAK THE PRESENT CYCLE OF VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA AND REPLACE IT BY A PROCESS OF NATIONAL DIALOGUE AND NEGOTIATIONS. THE TWELVE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE VISION OF A NEW SOUTH AFRICA, FREE FROM RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, IN WHICH ALL SOUTH AFRICANS CAN LIVE IN PEACE AND HARMONY AND ENJOY EQUAL RIGHTS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, IS NOT BEYOND GRASP. THIS WOULD ALSO BE OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO PEACE, STABILITY, SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION AS A WHOLE AND WOULD ALLOW SOUTH AFRICA TO REGAIN ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

THE TWELVE HAVE IDENTIFIED IN THE PAST WHAT STEPS THEY CONSIDER NECESSARY FOR GENUINE NATIONAL DIALOGUE TO BEGIN. THEY REMAIN CONVINCED THAT ONLY BROAD-BASED NEGOTIATIONS, INVOLVING THE GENUINE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN POPULATION, CAN BRING ABOUT A LASTING SETTLEMENT.

THE AIM OF THE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE THE EMERGENCE OF A FREE, DEMOCRATIC, NON-RACIAL AND UNITED SOUTH AFRICA WHICH TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE DIVERSITY OF ITS SOCIETY. THE LEGITIMATE POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS OF THE MAJORITY MUST BE MET. AT THE SAME TIME ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE DEvised TO ENSURE THAT EVERY SOUTH AFRICAN IS ABLE TO LOOK AT THE FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE AND A FEELING THAT HE WILL HAVE A SAY IN DECISIONS WHICH AFFECT HIM.

II) IT IS UP TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS THEMSELVES TO DEFINE - TOGETHER - THE EXACT SHAPE OF NEW CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, BUT THE TWELVE CONSIDER THAT THE FOLLOWING BASIC PRINCIPLES HAVE GENERAL VALIDITY:

1. THE INHERENT DIGNITY AND EQUALITY OF ALL HUMAN PERSONS BEFORE THE LAW.
2. RESPECT FOR AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS SET OUT IN THE BASIC DOCUMENTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, THE RIGHT TO LIBERTY AND SECURITY OF PERSONS AND THE RIGHT OF PROPERTY FOR ALL, WITHOUT DISTINCTION AS TO COLOUR, RACE, SEX OR CREED.
3. A GEOGRAPHICALLY UNITED SOUTH AFRICA WITH SINGLE CITIZENSHIP.
4. A DEMOCRATIC AND PLURALISTIC POLITICAL SYSTEM BASED ON UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, WITH ADEQUATE MINORITY PARTICIPATION.
5. PROTECTION OF MINORITY RIGHTS IN THE FIELDS OF CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION.
6. RULE OF LAW, SAFEGUARDED BY AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY.

THE TWELVE CONSIDER THE ABOVE PRINCIPLES TO BE CLOSELY INTER-RELATED AND MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE.

III) THE TWELVE EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT THE ABOVE PRINCIPLES CAN BE A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION FOR A JUST AND LASTING SETTLEMENT. IN THIS SPIRIT THE TWELVE REMAIN READY TO ASSIST THE PARTIES IN INITIATING THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE WHICH IS SO URGENTLY NEEDED IN SOUTH AFRICA TO ACHIEVE PEACEFUL CHANGE.

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statement
of principle

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DESK BY 170100Z,

PM/87/042

FOR CHARLES POWELL.

PRIME MINISTERSouth Africa

1. I will be letting you have a general appraisal of how we might handle the South Africa issue in the run-up to the Vancouver CHOGM. But there is one point on which I had hoped to be able to share my thoughts with you before your visit to Washington.
2. In South Africa itself, there now seems no prospect of significant change in the near future, certainly as long as P W Botha remains in place. Outside South Africa, there is a growing perception that sanctions are not the answer. But the pressure for them will not go away, least of all in the United States as the Presidential elections approach. We should be able to keep the lid on such pressures at Vancouver, provided nothing is done to stir Kenneth Kaunda and Robert Mugabe out of their reluctant acquiescence in the present position. We must therefore continue to make it clear that there is absolutely no give in our position - but quietly.
3. As the realisation that sanctions are not the answer grows, people are increasingly looking for other ways to show their concern. We have been leading the way with our efforts, in the Commonwealth and elsewhere, to bolster the Front Line States. This tide is running our way, and should continue to do so.



4. But there is a growing feeling that, with the sanctions road blocked, action in support of Front Line States is not enough. Hence the pressure for some kind of declaration of the kind promoted both by the US and by our partners in the European Community. We have discouraged statements of this kind. In the Twelve, we have so far held out successfully.

5. The Americans, who appear increasingly to regard the idea of a declaration as a harmless device to defuse pressure, strike me as more and more likely to produce one unilaterally after the summer break, before the President has to report to Congress on this subject. Among the Twelve, the Germans have given up any pretence of arguing against a European declaration, and are now actively pressing for one. At the EC Foreign Ministers' meeting in Copenhagen on Monday, only Portugal gave me any support in holding out against calls to go ahead with a declaration.

/ 6. Against this background I have looked again carefully at the enclosed text which the Dutch have promoted among the Twelve. I doubt if it would have much impact in South Africa; but I am pretty clear that neither it, nor for that matter the American text, would do any harm either. It goes less far than past statements we have agreed at CHOGM or in the Twelve, and it forecloses no options. On the contrary, it has some fresh elements calculated to reassure the whites. I do not believe that our acquiescence in such a statement would undermine such influence as we may have over the South African Government.

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7. In these circumstances I am becoming convinced that it will not serve our interests to continue to oppose the issue of the statement indefinitely: increasingly well-publicised opposition, especially in isolation, could serve only to arouse emotions and cause us problems which the declaration itself will not. Thus, I am coming to believe that the issue of the declaration, at the right moment, could actually strengthen the overall position we will want to maintain at Vancouver.

8. I should not be surprised if your initial reaction to this point is less than enthusiastic! It has only begun to strike me as valid after some months of arguing the contrary: but I do now see it in the way that I have described. Obviously we should want to talk about it. I trouble you with it now only because you may wish to bear it in mind in your discussions with President Reagan. I think we need to keep our options open.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Howe', written in a cursive style.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign & Commonwealth Office
16 July 1987