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MY TWO IPTS: APPEAL FOR RELEASE OF NELSON MANDELA

TEXT OF LETTER TO PRESIDENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

BEGINS

WE HAVE MET AND SPOKEN, AS POLITICIANS AND STATESMEN, REPRESENTATIVES OF CONSTITUENCIES OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS AND IDEOLOGIES. OF COURSE, IT IS CLEAR WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO AGREE ON MUCH. HOWEVER, I AM TAKING THE USUAL STEP OF WRITING TO YOU SIMPLY ON THE BASIS OF OUR COMMON HUMANITY, EVEN ALLOWING FOR THE RELATIVE VALUATIONS WHICH YOU PLACE ON THOSE OF YOUR RACE AND ON MINE

THERE ARE THOSE WHO GIVEN THE REALITIES OF THE POLITICAL RIGIDITIES THAT EXIST IN YOUR PART OF THE WORLD, WOULD CONSIDER THE SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED IN THIS LETTER AS EXERCISE IN FUTILITY AND WOULD RATHER WISH THE PURSUIT OF A VENGEFUL COURSE TO THE BITTER END.

HOWEVER, MY VERY STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT THE ISSUE IMPEL ME TO HAZARD THIS LETTER TO YOU IN THE HOPE THAT SOMEWHERE DEEP INSIDE YOU IT WILL STRIKE THE RIGHT CHORD.

I SPEAK ABOUT NELSON MANDELA (EXCLAM) YOU, MR PRESIDENT HAVE BEEN ON THIS EARTH ABOUT SEVENTY YEARS - THE MORE OR LESS NORMAL SPAN OF HUMAN EXISTENCE. AT SEVENTY, SPEAKING FROM MY PERCEPTION OF MORTALITY, ANY HUMAN BEING IS ON THE THRESHOLD OF MORTALITY. YET ANOTHER BEING, LIKE YOU, (INSPITE OF YOUR RELATIVE VALUATION) AT ABOUT THE SAME AGE LEVEL) AS YOU, EKES OUT HIS REMNANT DAYS IN PRISON. HE REMAINS BEHIND THE BARS WHICH HAVE CONSISTITUTED HIS ENTIRE WORLD FOR WELL OVER A QUARTER OF A CENTURY - A SIGNIFICANT PART OF MAN'S BIBLICAL ALLOTTED SPAN OF LIFE ON THIS EARTH (EXCLAM) THIS TIME I DO NOT SPEAK POLITICS SEMICOLON THIS TIME I DO NOT TRY TO CONVINCE YOU THAT THERE ARE VIABLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE COURSE YOU ARE PURSUING SEMICOLON THIS TIME I PASS NO JUDGEMENT. THE TIME AROUND, I AM RESTING MY CASE ON THE DICTATES OF SIMPLE HUMANITY AND IF YOU LIKE MAGNANIMITY AS EVEN STRONG ADVERSARIES MUST HAVE ROOM FOR RESPECT AND HUMANESS FOR ONE ANOTHER.

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MY APPEAL IS PERSONAL, SET MANDELA FREE NOW (EXCLAM) CONCEDE TO HIM THE DIGNITY OF SPENDING THE REST OF HIS DAYS WITH HIS PEOPLE AND WHEN DEATH COMES, DYING IN THE ARMS OF MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY AND LOVED ONES. AND WHO KNOWS, INSTEAD OF THE PROBLEM WHICH MANDELA'S CONTINUED INCARCERATION CONSTITUTES, HIS RELEASE, MAY, IN HIS OWN WORDS, BECOME 'PART OF THE SOLUTION TO THE SOUTH AFRICA'S QUAGMIRE'. IN THE NAME OF COMMON CHRISTIANITY WHICH WE ALL PROFESS, I PRAY YOU HAVE THE COURAGE TO TAKE THE DECISION TO RELEASE MANDELA ON HIS 70TH BIRTHDAY.

GENERAL OLUSEGUN OBASANJO

ENDS

HEAP

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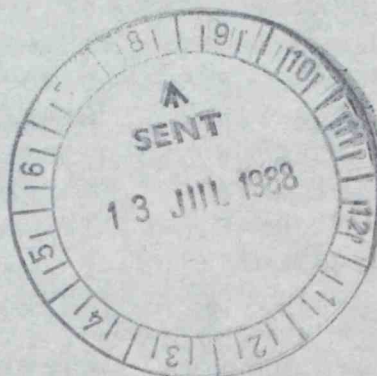
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PS

MR FAIRWEATHER
NO 10 DOWNING STREET

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PAGE 2
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