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PRIME MINISTER

SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Foreign Minister's Private Secretary came to see me this morning to deliver by hand the attached reply from President Botha to your recent message to him. It is far from helpful, particularly on Chief Buthelezi, betrays signs of irritation on President Botha's part, and much of it is not addressed directly to the points made in your own message.

In the ensuing discussion Mr. Evans made a number of points:

- the South African Government was fully committed to withdrawal from Angola and to implementation of SCR 435 on Namibia. The key question outstanding was Cuban troop withdrawal but he believed that this could be settled satisfactorily. The South African Government very much hoped that the UN Secretary General would visit South Africa as soon as possible to discuss the arrangements. There was a major task ahead for the United Nations. It would be important to appoint a good Special Representative as well as a competent military adviser. The South Africans favoured the Austrian General Philipe for this task. I said that the UN Secretary General had a number of urgent matters to attend to in August, including the Iran/Iraq negotiations, Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and the talks between the leaders of the two Cypriot communities. Assuming he accepted the invitation it might well not be possible for him to go until early September.
- Mr. Evans drew my attention to the careful wording of the passage in President Botha's message dealing with Mandela's release. The fact was that virtually the whole of the South Africa Cabinet including the President

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himself wanted his release, but the obstacle was the Security authorities. They constantly advised that his release would mean giving way to outside pressure, and would cause major public order problems in South Africa. In order to get it past them, there must be some evidence of willingness on the part of the ANC to moderate their position and cease terrorism. To be realistic, Mandela's release was not imminent.

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I am sending a copy of the mesage to the FCO. We shall need to consider in due course whether a further reply is needed.

C D P
C. D. POWELL

11 August 1988

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PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T121C/88

Union Buildings
Pretoria

9 August 1988

SUBJECT cc MASTER
OPS

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter dated 29 July 1988.

I note that you enquired about political and constitutional reform in South Africa when Chief Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi met with you in London recently. He has of course conveyed to you his perception of events in South Africa, while I must take into account the views not only of my own party but of leaders of all our communities.

I wonder if the Chief Minister mentioned to you how often he has declined to attend meetings to which he was invited as leader of his people, together with other elected and unelected black leaders. He has steadfastly refused to publicly support government efforts to initiate a process of dialogue and negotiation, unless his particular conditions are met. It is very disappointing that the Chief Minister has not yet taken a more courageous lead in the national interest, in joining the growing number of leaders with whom we are already deliberating about future constitutional structures in South Africa.

Besides addressing national issues of which he is critical, the Chief Minister should have informed you about the worsening relations between his government and Swaziland.

You may be aware that the Swaziland Government has for many years made representations about border adjustments which they would like to bring about, including an area known as Ingwavuma which, since colonial times, was claimed by the Swazi's. While the South African Government was willing to give consideration to the Swazi representations, Chief Minister Buthelezi has refused to contemplate the suggested cession of the area and indeed obtained a Supreme Court ruling which had the effect of blocking further negotiations with Swaziland. The South African Government has accepted the position and the Swazi Government was informed that it was now incumbent upon the Swazi's to seek an agreement with the Kwazulu Government. However, this problem persists and my Government is regularly approached by the Swazi Government with complaints that their citizens are being harrassed by the Kwazulu Government and are forced to abandon Swazi customs. This the Kwazulu Government denies. Veiled threats of violence as the only way to resolve the dispute are becoming prevalent. The point I want to make is that Western governments seldom, if ever, pay attention to the realities of our region and simply take decisions on the basis of Western thinking of how the problems of our region ought to be resolved.

There are other troublesome family fueds effecting the royal households of Kwazulu and Swaziland with which we have to deal on a practical daily basis, taking into account African traditions and dimensions. The Chief Minister has much with which to concern himself in the administration of Kwazulu and in his conversations abroad should not lose sight of his responsibility towards his people and the need to avoid tribal conflict which threatens his region.

Indeed, I often get the impression that Western governments in private lament the collapse of administrative capacity in African countries, which is the root cause of worsening conditions in Africa, but in public pronouncements and policy decisions do not acknowledge or take this reality

into account. A good example is the rhetoric and decisions taken in Toronto by Commonwealth Foreign Ministers last week. There are abundant reports emanating from technical and specialised agencies of the United Nations, documenting the grave consequences of the breakdown in Africa of administration in almost every sphere of life; food production, housing, health services, economics, and transportation. The inevitable result has been that neighbouring states in southern Africa, notwithstanding the efforts of the SADCC and Commonwealth meetings, lean more heavily on South Africa today than ever before.

It is simply inescapable that South Africa has done more for the countries and peoples of the region than any other power or international organisation. We get no recognition for this. Rather, the antagonism towards South Africa is fanned by Western countries who should be aware and concerned about the consequences of destroying the only stable economy in the region.

Does the West really want to create a situation where South Africa suffers the same retrogression as the rest of Africa? Is South Africa not the only country in Africa where there is still hope for all its communities, where stability prevails, which has the means to provide education and healthcare and work opportunities for its own people, as well as for up to 2 million Africans from neighbouring states?

Surely the time has come for Western governments to face the truth and acknowledge South Africa's role in southern Africa, rather than hiding behind popular creeds and out-dated cliches regarding apartheid. You know that I have taken dramatic steps which have resulted in a growing internal opposition among the white community. But, Western leaders do not recognise the course on which we have embarked, nor do they face up to the consequences of what they constantly demand of us. You cannot simply apply Western

values and ideas to South Africa. We too, are an African country and have to deal daily with African reactions to events and situations. For example, despite strenuous efforts by the Department of Health and Welfare to establish emergency facilities to deal with the devastation caused by floods in Natal, it was not possible to obtain the co-operation of a single committee or government agency in the Kwazulu administration. This was a major problem inhibiting emergency action in Kwazulu, where loss of life and devastation was most severe.

You cannot wish away the plural nature of our population, the diversity, the sociological affinities and the disparities which exist historically and naturally and which did not come into being as a result of my Government's policies and which will persist irrespective of which government is in power in South Africa, as they do in Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana and elsewhere in Africa.

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I have noted in your statement in Parliament on 26 July 1988 that the alleged links between the IRA, the ANC and SWAPO will be investigated. Against the above background and indications of ANC/SWAPO/IRA co-operation, raised by Mr Andrew Hunter M.P., I would have expected effective action by the British Government by now against the presence in Britain of ANC terrorists.

Since I last corresponded with you on this subject, the ANC has been responsible for a murderous car bombing campaign at sport stadiums, cinemas, restaurants and other public facilities, which has left innocent citizens in South Africa dead and maimed. It has brazenly publicised its intention to hit soft targets as it feels encouraged by a sense of international solidarity engendered by recent extravagant propaganda events held abroad, including London.

Is it necessary for me to again assure you that I am as concerned as you are about Mr Mandela's continued incarceration? On 20 June 1988 in Parliament I made an appeal and an open offer to security prisoners and those who have left the country for whatever reason to:

"Reject and abandon violence. If the ANC wishes to talk to us, it should lay down its arms; cease its acts of terrorism; refrain from detonating bombs which kill and maim innocent civilians; stop the brutal murder and mutilation of people in the Black townships; and cut its ties with international Communism".

I believe that you would agree that this is not an unreasonable attitude. Until such time as there is evidence of a disposition on the part of the revolutionaries to reconsider their commitment to the violent overthrow of order in this country, my Government would be abrogating its

responsibility to the people of South Africa and beyond, by capitulating to their demands.

I am sure you do not expect this of me and trust that you would agree that my Government is best placed to assess the circumstances and possible consequences of Mr Mandela's release.

The South African economy has been subjected to particularly negative influences from abroad in recent years. The sanctions campaign has not abated and has indeed had a detrimental effect on socio-economic development in this country and in other countries in the region. I appreciate your consistent resistance to sanctions. I can assure you that I will not be distracted from the course on which my Government has embarked to uplift all our communities through the improvement and expansion of education, training, social services and health. These programmes, many of which take place with the full cooperation of the private sector, are part of a process of growth which contribute towards economic and social development in South Africa.

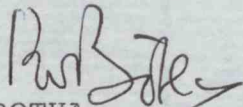
While I appreciate the pressure that you experience in your resistance to sanctions, if the South African Government were to comply with the demands of the international community, the whole of Southern Africa would be plunged into disaster with dire political and socio-economic consequences.

There are encouraging signs from certain quarters that South Africa's interest in making a practical and positive contribution to regional peace and development, is slowly being recognised. Some progress has been made in our relations with Mozambique and Angola and other neighbouring states. The obstinate attitude of Mr Mugabe's government is a serious concern and he should heed our appeal that the territory of neighbouring states should not be used as a

springboard for terrorist incursions into South Africa. We simply will not tolerate such a threat to our national security.

At the beginning of this year I tentatively expressed the hope that 1988 might mark the end to conflict in Southern Africa. Perhaps the time is approaching when my proposal of a broadbased conference with a view to achieving peace and the creation of an umbrella pact on mutual security in the region as a whole, might evoke a positive response from neighbouring governments and the international community.

Yours sincerely



P W BOTHA
STATE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister
No 10 Downing Street
London SW1
UNITED KINGDOM

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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

11 August 1988

SOUTH AFRICA

I enclose a copy of the reply from President Botha to the Prime Minister's recent message which was delivered to me this morning by the Private Secretary to the South African Foreign Minister. As you will see, it is not at all helpful, particularly in its references to Chief Buthelezi, and much of it fails to address the points in the Prime Minister's own message. We shall need to consider in due course whether a further reply is required. 11 BF-

In handing over the message Mr. Evans made a number of additional points:

- the South African Government was fully committed to withdrawal from Angola and to implementation of SCR 435 on Namibia. The key question outstanding was Cuban troop withdrawal but he believed that this could be settled satisfactorily. The South African Government very much hoped that the UN Secretary General would visit South Africa as soon as possible to discuss the arrangements. There was a major task ahead for the United Nations. It would be important to appoint a good Special Representative as well as a competent military adviser. The South Africans favoured the Austrian General Philippe for this task. I said that the UN Secretary General had a number of urgent matters to attend to in August, including the Iran/Iraq negotiations, Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and the talks between the leaders of the two Cypriot communities. Assuming he accepted the invitation it might well not be possible for him to go until early September.
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You will wish to consider whether we should encourage the UN Secretary General to take up the invitation to visit South Africa as soon as he can. I think the Prime Minister's view would be that we should do so.

(C. D. POWELL)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.