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S. AFRICA: Relations: Pt 10

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PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SECRET

SERIAL No. T 1178/86
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OF 271900Z JUNE 86

EUROPEAN COUNCIL: SOUTH AFRICA

1. PLEASE GIVE THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO
PRESIDENT BOTHA JUST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:

BEGINS

DEAR MR PRESIDENT,

I HAVE JUST GOT BACK TO LONDON FROM THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL IN
THE HAGUE AND WANT TO LET YOU HAVE STRAIGHTAWAY AN ACCOUNT OF OUR
DISCUSSION OF SOUTH AFRICA. I AM ASKING OUR AMBASSADOR TO HAND
OVER TO YOU THE TEXT OF THE COUNCIL'S CONCLUSIONS. THESE, AND
NOTHING ELSE, ARE WHAT ALL TWELVE GOVERNMENTS AGREED AND PUT
THEIR NAMES TO, WHATEVER OTHER CLAIMS YOU MAY HEAR.

OF COURSE, THERE ARE PASSAGES WHICH WILL BE UNWELCOME TO
YOU. BUT OVERALL THE THRUST AND INTENTION IS POSITIVE: A
DESIRE TO HELP FIND A PEACEFUL WAY FORWARD IN SOUTH AFRICA. WE
AGREED A NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO ASSIST BLACK SOUTH
AFRICANS. THE COMMUNITY HAS ALSO ASKED GEOFFREY HOWE TO VISIT
SOUTH AFRICA TO SEE IN WHAT WAYS WE CAN HELP THE PROCESS OF
NEGOTIATION, ON WHICH YOU HAVE TOLD US YOU HOPE TO EMBARK.

DESPITE THE INITIAL WISH OF A MAJORITY OF MEMBER STATES TO
PROCEED IN IMMEDIATE ADOPTION OF MEASURES AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA,
HELMUT KOHL AND I - WITH HELP FROM MR CAVACO SILVA - RESISTED
THIS. WE BROUGHT OUR COLLEAGUES TO ACCEPT THAT CONSIDERATION

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SHOULD BE DEFERRED, AND CONSULTATIONS HELD WITH THE US, JAPAN AND OTHERS. WE WERE EMPHATIC THAT YOU SHOULD NOT BE PRESENTED WITH AN ULTIMATUM.

A GREAT DEAL NOW TURNS ON THE SUCCESS OF GEOFFREY HOWE'S MISSION. NATURALLY I HOPE YOU WILL EXTEND A WELCOME TO HIM AND ASSUME THAT YOU WILL SEE HIM YOURSELF. HE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOUR FOREIGN MINISTER TO DISCUSS ARRANGEMENTS AND TIMING. YOU WILL APPRECIATE THAT IT WILL BE ESSENTIAL FOR HIM TO HAVE ACCESS TO ALL SHADES OF OPINION IN SOUTH AFRICA, INCLUDING MR MANDELA.

I MOST EARNESTLY HOPE THAT DURING THIS PERIOD YOU WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO AVOID ANY ACTIONS THAT MIGHT HAZARD THE DELICATE PROCESS THAT WE ARE TRYING TO PUT IN PLACE. INDEED I HOPE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ADOPT TANGIBLE MEASURES TO DEMONSTRATE THAT YOUR REFORMIST POLICIES ARE STILL ON COURSE, PARTICULARLY YOUR INTENTION TO GRANT POLITICAL RIGHTS TO BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS. THE STEP WHICH WOULD DO MORE THAN ANYTHING TO UNDERLINE THIS INTENTION WOULD BE THE RELEASE OF MR MANDELA. THIS WOULD ALSO DO MUCH TO REASSURE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

I HOPE THAT WE CAN USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ACHIEVE THE PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS WHICH I KNOW YOU EARNESTLY SEEK.

WITH BEST WISHES,
YOURS SINCERELY,
MARGARET THATCHER
ENDS

HOWE
LIMITED
HD/SAFD
PS
PS/MRS CHALKER
PS/PUS
MR. FERGUSSON
MR. REEVE

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