

PRIME MINISTER

SOUTHERN AFRICA: STATEMENT BY THE TEN

As I understand this muddly letter:

- (i) no statement on South Africa was issued at Milan;
- (ii) the Foreign Secretary thinks that we should try to get a statement now, to hold the Ten to a consistent policy, and to give us a solid position at CHOGM;
- (iii) his preferred text is at A;
- (iv) his fallback is the Milan text at B;
- (v) in either of them he is prepared to drop reference to renunciation of violence by all concerned "including those opposed to apartheid";
- (v) he is prepared to accept the sentence "in the absence of any significant progress within a reasonable period of time, the Ten reserve the right to reconsider their attitude". He points out that this is less strong than the wording agreed at CHOGM in 1983;
- (vi) he is also prepared to speak of "adaptation and strengthening" of the Code of Conduct."

This all seems a bit removed from the real world. I can't see how one can derive much reassurance about holding to a common position of the Ten, when the statement specifically talks of 'reconsidering' their attitude. I doubt if CHOGM in October will be much impressed one way or the other by what the Ten say in July. And dropping the reference to violence by those opposed to apartheid is inconsistent with your letters to President Botha which speak of rejecting violence whoever is responsible.

In short I think we would be better off without any text; and now that the Milan meeting has passed, there seems no particular reason to issue one.

The Foreign Secretary may raise this at his bilateral tomorrow.

C.D.P.

(C. D. POWELL)

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