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POLICY STATEMENTS

26/85. BRITAIN, THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND SOUTH AFRICA: EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION MINISTERIAL MEETING SEPTEMBER 10

The Ministers of the Ten, Spain and Portugal heard the report of the European Mission which visited South Africa from August 30 to September 1, 1985:

The European delegation met with members of the South African Government, representatives of the churches and trade unions, leading businessmen, journalists and leaders of the Progressive Federal Party (PEP) Inkatha and the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO). To supplement these contacts, on September 10 the President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers and the member of the Commission responsible for external relations met representatives of the African National Congress. The conclusions which emerged from the visit of the Foreign Ministers and the ministerial discussions can be summarized in two points.

- "The Ten, together with Spain and Portugal, take note of the declaration of the South African Government and expect of it that it take specific steps.
 - "Meanwhile they will maintain their pressure on South Africa.
- "The Ten and Spain and Portugal have decided to harmonize their attitudes on the following measures:

Restrictive Measures

- A rigorously controlled embargo on exports of arms and paramilitary equipment to the RSA.

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- A rigorously controlled embargo on imports of arms and paramilitary equipment from the RSA.
- Refusal to cooperate in the military sphere.
- Recall of military attaches accredited to the RSA, and refusal to grant accreditation to military attaches from the RSA.
- Discouraging cultural and scientific agreements except where these contribute towards the ending of apartheid or have no possible role in supporting it: and freezing of official contacts and international agreements in the sporting and security spheres.
- Cessation of oil exports to the RSA.
- Cessation of exports of sensitive equipment destined for the police and armed forces of the RSA.
- Prohibition of all new collaboration in the nuclear sector.

Positive Measures

- Code of conduct: Adaptation, reinforcement and publicity.
- Programs of assistance to non-violent anti-apartheid organizations, particularly to the churches.
- Programs to assist the education of the non-white community, including grants for study at the universities in the countries originating the programs.
- Intensification of contacts with the non-white community in the political, trade union, business, cultural, scientific and sporting sectors, etc.
- Programs to assist the SADCC and the front-line states.
- Programs to increase awareness among the citizens of member states resident in the RSA.

The British Government was able to support the general statement and the positive measures, but wished to give further consideration to the other measures proposed.

In speaking to the press after the Ministerial meeting, Mr Malcolm Rifkind, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office made five main points:

- (1) "All member states had a common aim of seeing the end of apartheid and full political rights for all South Africans.
- (2) "The meeting had not been a failure. All member states had agreed the political statement and the list of positive measures to help the Blacks in South Africa. The U.K. had reserved its position on the list of restrictive measures so that the implications could be fully considered. Detailed texts, some of which had been drafted only today, could not be agreed blind. After all it had taken the U.S. a month to put together the list of measures recently announced. We did not oppose the position taken by others.
- (3) "The U.K. had for historic reasons a greater involvement than other member states in South Africa. Because of this, the measures proposed raised wider issues for the U.K. than for some others.
- (4) "Many of the proposed restrictive measures had already been implemented by the U.K. (arms embargo, etc) but some were new, e.g. ban on cultural cooperation. The U.K. would need to consider whether this would have any implications for the excellent work being done within South Africa by the British Council to promote cultural values fundamentally opposed to the apartheid system.
- (5) "Equally the proposed withdrawal of military attaches, opposed by U.K. and Portugal (2 of the 3 E.C. countries to have attaches in South Africa) raised the question whether it was advisable to reduce knowledge of, and influence on one of the most powerful bodies in South Africa."

Mr. Rifkind repudiated the suggestion that Britain's action showed that she was friendly towards the Botha Government and urged that British views on economic sanctions were shared by many prominent Black and White opponents of the South African regime. Indeed the U.K. Government was often attacked by the South African Government for acting in an unfriendly way.

The British Government needed more time to consider the impact of the restrictive measures now proposed and to consider whether they would help to achieve the objectives which all shared. It was important

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to encourage the South African Government down the path we wanted them to follow. Measures which drove the White community back into a laager would be counter-productive.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, reinforced these points in a press conference in Lagos, Nigeria on September 12. He was asked why Britain had refused to endorse European Community measures to be taken against South Africa?

The Foreign Secretary replied:

"Let me make it clear there was no disagreement between Britain and our European partners yesterday in the view which we took of the situation in South Africa. We took exactly the same view of what needs to be done in South Africa, the need as I said for bringing apartheid to an end and the need for commencement of genuine dialogue between the Government there and representatives of the Black population. The difference was in respect of measures, the restrictive measures recommended yesterday for we think it is necessary to have more time to consider some of them. This is not surprising because the nature of the relationships between each European country and South Africa is different. Historically Britain has a much longer relationship with South Africa than any other and there are many more contacts with the South African people living in that country. It is very important for us to give proper consideration to the restrictive measures being used to ensure that they are in accordance with our view. Will these measures most effectively through the pressure of Britain bringing its influence to bear bring about the change we want in South Africa."

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