

SECRET

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13.

PRIME MINISTER

REPLY TO PRESIDENT BOTHA

When you saw the South African Ambassador to take delivery of President Botha's message, you said that you would reply in writing.

I attach a reply which follows as closely as possible what you said to the Ambassador. I am sure it is right to do this, because it reflects the strength of your feeling on the main issue of the need for further reform.

There is now even more reason, given the South African Government's action today, in banning all political activity, even peaceful and legal activity, by virtually all black opposition groups. Even by Botha's standards this is a crass act which is bound to re-open all the arguments about sanctions. It is a crudely repressive measure and needs to be condemned as such (although we have tried to be more restrained in the message).

Agree to sign?

"Dear Mr. President".

C.D.P.

C. D. POWELL

24 February 1988

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