

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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YOU ARE INVITED TO A NEWS CONFERENCE WITH THE MOST REVEREND EDWARD WALTER SCOTT, PRIMATE OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA, THIS FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 1986, AT 10:00 A.M., IN BARTH HALL OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, 4800 WOODWARD AVENUE AT WARREN, DETROIT.

ARCHBISHOP SCOTT IS A MEMBER OF THE EMINENT PERSONS GROUP OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS WHICH OVER THE PAST THREE MONTHS ATTEMPTED TO ORGANIZE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA AND THE DISSIDENT GROUPS HOPING FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE GROWING CRISIS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

ARCHBISHOP SCOTT, WHO HAS HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF VIEWING THE CRISIS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA FROM THE INSIDE, IS PREPARED TO SHARE HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE CRISIS, INCLUDING SUCH ISSUES AS DISINVESTMENT AND SANCTIONS.

The seven member Eminent Persons Group made two trips to Southern Africa in three months to find a basis for negotiations, meeting with both Mr. Botha and a man the South African President has never seen, the imprisoned black leader, Nelson Mandela.

In London, England, a week ago, on June 12th, The Commonwealth group released its 68 page final report which is presently being reviewed and debated by the governments of the member nations of The Commonwealth, as well as by the Reagan Administration and United States Congress. Enclosed you will find excerpts from The Commonwealth Report.

The members of the Eminent Persons Group are Olusegun Obasanjo, a former Nigerian head of state; Malcolm Fraser, a former Australian Prime Minister; Swaran Singh, who has been both a Foreign Minister and a Defense Minister in India; John Malecela, a former Tanzanian Foreign Minister; Lord Barber, a former Chancellor of the Exchequer under Mrs. Thatcher; Dame Nita Barrow of Barbados, the chairman of the World Council of Churches; and Archbishop Edward Scott of Canada's Anglican Church.

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Excerpts From Commonwealth Unit Report

Special to The New York Times

LONDON, June 12 — Following are excerpts from the report on South Africa issued here today by the Commonwealth mission known as the Eminent Persons Group:

During the preliminary visit, General Obasanjo was permitted to see Mr. Mandela. Thereafter, the full group met with him on two occasions, although not with other detainees.

The group approached the meetings with Mr. Mandela with another measure of care. It was impossible not to be aware of the mythology surrounding him, but equally, we were determined that it should not color our impressions or influence our judgment. As far as possible, we resolved to approach these meetings with an open mind.

We were first struck by his physical authority — by his immaculate appearance, his apparent good health, and his commanding presence. In his manner, he exuded authority, and received the respect of all around him, including his jailers. That in part seemed to reflect his own philosophy of separating people from policy.

His authority clearly extends throughout the nationalist movement, although he constantly reiterated that he could not speak for his colleagues in the A.N.C.; that, apart from his personal view point, any concerted view must come after proper consultation with all concerned; and that his views could only carry weight when expressed collectively through the A.N.C.

Secondly, we found his attitude to others outside the A.N.C. reasonable and conciliatory. He did not conceal his differences with Chief Buthelezi and he was conscious of the divisions which had arisen among the black community. Nevertheless, he was confident that, if he were to be released from prison, the unity of all black leaders including Chief Buthelezi, could be achieved.

In our discussions, Nelson Mandela also took care to emphasize his desire for reconciliation across the divide of color. He described himself as a deeply committed South African nationalist but added that South African nationalists came in more than one color — there were white people, colored people and Indian people who were also deeply committed South African nationalists. He pledged himself anew to work to a multiracial society to which all would have a secure place.

He recognized the fears of many white people, which had been intensified by the Government's own propaganda, but emphasized the importance of minority groups being given a real sense of security in any new society in South Africa.

Climate for Talks And Confidence

It was his strongly stated view that if the circumstances could be created in which the Government and the A.N.C. could talk, some of the problems which arose solely through lack of contact could be eliminated. The fact of talking was essential in the building of mutual confidence.

Thirdly, we were impressed by the consistency of his beliefs. He emphasized that he was a nationalist, not a Communist, and that his principles were unchanged from those to which he subscribed when the Freedom Charter was drawn up in 1955.

Those principles included the necessity for the unity and political emancipation of all Africans in the land of their birth; the need for multiracial society, free from any kind of racial, religious or political discrimination; the paramountcy of democratic principles, and of political and human rights, and equality of opportunity.

We questioned Nelson Mandela extensively about his view on violence. The A.N.C., he said, had for many years operated as a nonviolent organization and had only been forced into armed struggle because it became the unavoidable response to the violence of apartheid. He stressed that violence could never be an ultimate solution and that the nature of human relationships required negotiation.

He was not in a position to renounce the use of violence as a condition of his release, and we recognized that in the circumstances currently prevailing in South Africa, it would be unreasonable to expect that of him, or anyone else.

We accept that the release of Nelson Mandela presents the South African Government with a difficult dilemma. Having held him too long in prison, there is a growing realization in Government circles that any benefits of incarceration are outweighed by the disadvantages which daily become more apparent.

Yet to release him now — as some in Government say is their wish — would be to do so into conditions much changed from 10, or even 5, years ago. In a mood of unrest and upheaval, with growing black awareness and political protest being matched by increasing anxiety among whites, and the rise of white extremism, the Government expressed the fear that his release might result in an uncontrollable explosion of violence.

We do not hold this view. Provided the negotiating process was agreed, Mr. Mandela's own voice would appeal for calm. We believe his authority would secure it.

'Self-Evident' Qualities Of Leadership

Our judgment of Nelson Mandela has been formed as the result of lengthy discussions with him, spanning three meetings. He impressed us as an outstandingly able and sincere person whose qualities of leadership were self-evident. We found him unmarked by any trace of bitterness despite his long imprisonment.

In the Government's thinking, there were a number of nonnegotiables; for example, the concept of group rights — the very basis of the apartheid system — was sacrosanct; the "homelands" created in furtherance of that concept would not disappear, but be reinforced with the emergence of an "independent" KwaNdebele; the principle of one man one vote in a unitary state was beyond the realm of possibility; the Population Registration Act would continue; and the present Tricameral Constitution which institutionalizes racism must be the vehicle for future constitutional reform.

From these and other recent developments, we draw the conclusion that while the Government claims to be ready to negotiate, it is in truth not yet prepared to negotiate fundamental change, not to countenance the creation of genuine democratic structures, nor to face the prospect of the end of white domination and white power in the foreseeable future. Its program of reform does not end apartheid, but seeks to give it a less inhuman face. Its quest is power sharing, but without surrendering overall white control.

Behind these attitudes lurks a deeper truth. After more than 18 months of persistent unrest, upheaval and killings unprecedented in the country's history, the Government believes that it can contain the situation indefinitely by use of force. We were repeatedly told by Ministers that the Government had deployed only a fraction of the power at its disposal. Although the Government's confidence may be valid in the short term, but at great human cost, it is plainly misplaced in the longer term. South Africa is predominantly a country of black people. To believe that they can be indefinitely suppressed is an act of self-delusion.

Put in the most simple way, the blacks have had enough of apartheid. They are no longer prepared to submit to its oppression, discrimination and exploitation. They can no longer stomach being treated as aliens in their own country. They have confidence not merely in the justice of their cause, but in the inevitability of their victory. Unlike the earlier periods of unrest and Government attempts to stamp out protest, there has been during the last 18 months no outflow of black refugees from South Africa. The strength of black convictions is now matched by readiness to die for those convictions. They will, therefore, sustain their struggle, whatever the cost.

The writ of the Government will be increasingly circumscribed. Inter-black rivalry and violence, partly encouraged and fomented by the Government, will grow, making the task of negotiating a settlement even more difficult. Political upheaval and social unrest will accelerate the flight of capital and professional skills and the economy's downward spiral.

Amidst all this gloom, the quality of the country's black leaders shines through. Their achievement in bringing about popular and trade union mobilization in the face of huge odds commands respect. Their idealism, their genuine sense of nonracialism, and their readiness not only to forget but to forgive, compel admiration. These are precious assets which a new South Africa will need; they may be lost altogether if the Government continues to shrink from taking the necessary political decisions with a sense of urgency. The options are diminishing by the day.

What can be done? What remaining influence does the international community have? What can major states do to help avert an otherwise inevitable disaster? There may be no course available that can guarantee a significantly more peaceful solution. But against the background in which ever-increasing violence will be a certainty, the question of further measures immediately springs to mind. As the Nassau Accord makes clear, Commonwealth Heads of Government have agreed that, in the event of adequate progress not having been made in South Africa within a period of six months, they would consider further measures.

While we are not determining the nature of extent of any measures which might be adopted, or their effectiveness, we point to the fact that the Government of South Africa has itself used economic measures against its neighbors and that such measures are patently instruments of its own national policy. We are convinced that the South African Government is concerned about the adoption of effective economic measures against it.

If it comes to the conclusion that it would always remain protected from such measures, the process of change in South Africa is unlikely to increase in momentum and the descent into violence would be accelerated. In these circumstances, the cost in lives may have to be counted in millions.

The question in front of heads of government is in our view clear. It is not whether such measures will compel change; it is already the case that their absence and Pretoria's belief that they need not be feared, defers change. Is the Commonwealth to stand by and allow the cycle of violence to spiral? Or will it take concerted action of an effective kind? Such actions may offer the last opportunity to avert what could be the worst blood bath since the Second World War.

We hope this report will assist the Commonwealth — and the wider international community — in helping all the people of South Africa save themselves from that awesome tragedy.