



Send appreciation note

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

November 15, 1985

Dear Mr. Crockett:

Secretary Shultz has asked me to thank you for your letter of October 1 concerning the detention of members of the anti-apartheid movement in the Republic of South Africa. I regret the delay in this reply.

I am pleased to report that Sue Britton, Anita Kromberg, Michael Evans, and Richard Steele of the End Conscription Movement, who were arrested on September 9 under Section 29 of South Africa's Internal Security Act, have been released - Mr. Evans on September 26, the others on September 20. Family members had brought applications on their behalf, which maintained the State had refused to show cause for their arrest. Natal Supreme Court Judge Leon considered the appeal and ordered their release.

All four were active in anti-conscription activities, and were staff members of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. They are all peaceful opponents of the apartheid system and proponents of conscientious objection. Our Embassy in South Africa reports Mr. Steele conducted a three-week fast as part of the "Troops Out of the Townships" campaign organized by the End Conscription Movement. Ms. Britton announced she was essentially treated well but found the isolation of having been held incommunicado disconcerting. We have no statements by Ms. Kromberg or Mr. Evans since their release.

Although we are gratified these individuals were freed, we remain concerned about the almost 1,000 persons still detained under the state of emergency regulations. The U.S. Government has made high-level representations to the South African Government on the state of emergency and abuses of human rights.

The Honorable
George W. Crockett, Jr.,
House of Representatives.

Publicly and privately we have pressed for lifting the state of emergency. We regularly ask the police for information about detainees and exert diplomatic pressure to secure the release of those held without charge. We continue to call for the release of peaceful opponents to South African Government policies, and will monitor the human rights situation there closely.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wm Ball".

William L. Ball, III
Assistant Secretary
Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs