

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

December 27, 1977

Dear Congressman Mitchell:

The President asked me to respond to the twelve points on South Africa raised by the Black Caucus. I enclose a memorandum which discusses these points. While you may not agree with all of the positions stated therein, I hope this exchange provides a strong foundation for our continuing discussions on African policy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Z. Brzezinski", with a small dot at the end of the line.

Zbigniew Brzezinski

The Honorable Parren Mitchell  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Enclosure

MEMORANDUM ON  
CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS  
TWELVE POINTS ON SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction

The discussion which follows must be seen in light of the Administration's general approach to South Africa. We do not believe that the problem of apartheid and hence the problems in US-South African relations will submit to either an easy or a quick solution. Cataclysmic changes, events, or reversals are unlikely. Therefore, we see this situation as one whose progress will only be made by determined effort over the long haul. This is the intent behind our actions toward South Africa. It is also clear that our influence and leverage within South Africa are limited. We do not have the capacity to greatly influence events from afar according to our will, and therefore our policy must proceed on this basis. As we are operating with limited resources, and as we see this to be a struggle over the long haul, we believe it quite important to husband our limited resources and use them when they promise to do the most good. Accordingly, our response to the events of October 19 was a measured one, and deliberately did not involve all of the available measures possible towards South Africa. A close watch will be kept on all facets of this situation, and we intend to proceed in the above spirit towards doing what is possible towards the goal of a progressive transformation of South African society towards full political participation for all South Africans.

1. Recall the US Ambassador to South Africa for consultation.  
In the wake of the bannings and detentions of October 19, Ambassador Bowdler was called to Washington for consultation with key Administration officials, and key members of the House and Senate. This made it plain to the South African Government how seriously we viewed the events of October 19.
  
2. Downgrade the US Mission to South Africa. There are several possible steps we might take in this direction should the circumstances in South Africa warrant. For the time being, we believe the steps we have taken constitute an appropriate reaction to the situation; they signal clearly our concern while preserving our ability to monitor events and communicate with the top decision makers in the Vorster government.
  
3. Eliminate US commercial, defense, and agricultural attaches to South Africa. End all US-South Africa cooperative agency agreements such as the ones with Treasury, Department of Defense. Our commercial officer in Johannesburg was recalled for consultation to participate in a comprehensive review of our economic and commercial relations with South Africa. He has returned to South Africa to complete his tour, but the review is still going on. It includes evaluating our present economic and commercial representation. The status of the Agricultural Attache is also part of this review. The Administration has already withdrawn the Naval Attache; we believe the South Africans took this as an unequivocal sign of our concern. We believe that further immediate withdrawals would seriously impair our ability to monitor events.

The cooperative agency agreement between the Department of Defense and South Africa relates to the operation of Eastern Test Range Tracking Station 13 near Pretoria. The future of this tracking station is presently under review.

The Department of the Treasury maintains no cooperative agency agreement with South Africa, although an Income Tax Treaty and an Estate Tax Treaty between the United States and South Africa, in existence since 1952, act to prevent double taxation. In this connection, there are informal and limited contacts between employees of the Internal Revenue Service and the South African Department of Inland Revenue.

4. Deny tax credits to US companies which invest in South Africa and pay taxes there. Develop strong tax disincentives to reduce US investment in South Africa. US investment in South Africa is part of our review of economic/commercial relations with South Africa. This is one of the most difficult questions of all; we are continuing to weigh very carefully the advantages and disadvantages of US investment and business involvement in South Africa, especially whether they impede or advance that society's moving away from apartheid and toward full political participation by all South Africans.

5. Support elimination of Export-Import guarantees for loans to US companies trading and investing in South Africa. This is especially critical to stop the advanced technology goods flow into the country. This, too, will be part of our economic-commercial review. Already, however, EXIM's Board of Directors has become more cautious, on both political and economic grounds, about extending long-term loan guarantees involving South Africa. Moreover, new procedures require that all EXIM approvals give careful consideration to human rights; this fact alone will ensure close scrutiny for new EXIM proposals affecting South Africa.

6. End US South Africa cooperative agreement on nuclear technology and research. End the granting of export licenses for the export of nuclear materials to South Africa. The question of the US-South African nuclear relationship is an extremely difficult one. It is our judgment that a complete break now would put South Africa on an irrevocable "go-it-alone" path, which would compound the already serious problem of nuclear proliferation. The US Government has for the past two years withheld export licenses for shipment of highly enriched uranium to South Africa, and to date we have not approved shipments of low enriched uranium for use in the power plants now under construction, even though both varieties of fuel are subject to full international safeguards. We will not permit shipments of any nuclear material or technology until we have clear assurances from the South African Government that it will adhere to the NPT and submit its nuclear facilities to effective safeguards.

7. Stop Commerce Department licensing for export to South Africa of so-called "non-military" weapons. Under Executive Order, we have embargoed the sale of all weapons - military and "non-military" - to South Africa. Following the Security Council's imposition of a mandatory arms embargo on South Africa, the Administration announced its intention to support Resolution 418 fully, and to take additional steps to assure that the embargo is as effective as possible. The President has directed that there be no further exports destined for the South African military or police, including exports of spare parts and maintenance equipment for all prohibited items. Any proposed export to South Africa which has potential military or security applications will undergo the closest scrutiny.

8. Initiate immediate Security Council action at the United Nations against South Africa. The United States voted for Resolution 418 imposing a mandatory arms embargo on South Africa under Chapter VII of the Charter. This is the first occasion of the Security Council voting sanctions against a UN member state. At the same time, the United States, along with our allies, voted against other resolutions which would have imposed comprehensive mandatory sanctions in the economic, commercial and nuclear fields. We considered these inappropriate for a variety of reasons. Retaining flexibility is important for future dealings with South Africa - including, if events require them, further Security Council sanctions. In the meantime, we have sent an unmistakable warning signal to the South African Government making clear that we are now looking for signs of progress and movement away from apartheid. We did not want our actions to drive the South Africans into total defiance; we concluded, on balance, that more severe action would have done just that.

9. Support UN resolutions on ending nuclear, military, and economic cooperation with South Africa in the General Assembly during its session on Apartheid in November. The United States is unable to support resolutions ending nuclear and economic cooperation with South Africa that are now under consideration in the General Assembly, and which would be inappropriate at this time.

For a number of years we, along with other nations, have been urging South Africa to adhere to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to place all its nuclear programs under full international safeguards; this would advance our global non-proliferation objectives. We are still consulting with the South African Government on this issue, and while this process continues we do not favor a policy which would prohibit further cooperation with South Africa in the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

We cannot support the resolution calling for an end to economic cooperation because it requests the Security Council to consider mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa. We are opposed to the use of mandatory trade embargoes as a political instrument except in the most exceptional cases. It is important, moreover, that we retain flexibility for the future, should developments in South Africa warrant further US or international response.

10. Support immediate Congressional action to pass legislation placing economic and diplomatic sanctions on South Africa. The Administration welcomed the concurrent resolution introduced by Congresswoman Collins, testified in favor of it before the House International Relations Committee, and was most pleased that the House passed it by an overwhelming 347 to 54 vote. We welcome Congress' help in making the South African Government understand how the American people feel about the events of October 19. We would,

of course, need to study carefully any additional proposed legislation which might commit the US Government to specific actions on South Africa, in light of the reservations already discussed about economic and diplomatic sanctions.

11. Support a moratorium on all US-South African exchange programs. The Administration does not favor this proposal. We attach great importance to keeping lines of communication open, permitting the interchange of ideas and opinion. In South Africa, educational and cultural programs have been instrumental in maintaining contact with the black, colored, and Asian communities, as well as with whites opposing government policies. They give Americans a clearer picture of developments in South Africa, and afford South Africans, of all races and persuasions, some exposure to American society, culture and policies. American efforts to deal with our own racial problems are particularly important in this regard. To end or suspend exchange programs would sharply reduce our contact with and understanding of South African society, and limit us much more sharply to official government-to-government contacts than is now the case.

12. Strongly affirm a US policy calling for one-man-one-vote in South Africa. The Administration has and will continue to make it clear to the South African Government that we see no alternative to immediate steps aimed at ending racial discrimination and bringing about full political participation. We have not and will not give the South Africans any American plan or blueprint, nor any specific timetable within which it must be achieved. But we do consider it essential that all groups in South African society begin a genuine dialogue now on how they will bring about full participation by all South Africans in the economic and political life of their country.