

Statement

Secretary of
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**NOTES FOR A SPEECH BY
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOE CLARK,
TO THE OTTAWA MEETING OF
THE COMMONWEALTH WORKING GROUP
ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT FOR A
POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA**

**OTTAWA, Ontario
April 17, 1991**

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome this distinguished gathering to Ottawa and to extend the best wishes of the Canadian government for the success of your deliberations.

Just 15 months ago, I addressed a similar conference here in Ottawa which was exploring the provision of the educational tools for a new non-racial and democratic South Africa. At that time, in the earliest days of the Pretoria spring, Nelson Mandela had not yet been released, opposition political organizations were still banned, the State of Emergency remained in effect, and the pillars of apartheid seemed cemented in place. We've come a long way since then. The political environment in South Africa has been radically transformed in the past year.

The mood in South Africa has changed as well. Black South Africans now firmly believe that political power is in their grasp, if not this year then very soon. It is not just a dream for their children, or their children's children, to achieve. This confidence that their long struggle for political rights will soon bear fruit is accompanied by a painful realization that the immediate economic fruits of political change may prove modest indeed. The black community will rapidly assume its leadership in all levels of the economy, of government, and of society; but the new South Africa will be constructed over several generations. The scars of 40 years of apartheid will not fade for many years.

The easy part of change in South Africa may prove to be the negotiation of a new constitution. The difficult part is to transform the economic and social reality in South Africa which will remain grim for some time to come. No one should envy the government that will assume power in a post-apartheid South Africa. It will face a very, very tough job. How do you convince the black masses who have great expectations about what liberty will bring, that they must continue to be patient? How do you expect that, in most cases, their poverty will continue, because they lack the skills, and the jobs, to acquire the homes and consumer goods and social services that they desire?

The American civil rights poet, Langston Hughes, once wrote:

What happens to a dream deferred:
Does it wither, like a raisin in the sun,
Or does it explode?

If the dream cannot become reality suddenly, at least its achievement must begin, so change will neither wither nor explode. That is the challenge facing South Africa's leaders as a result of the revolution of rising expectations in South Africa's townships. It is a challenge which the African National Congress (ANC) leadership, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), Inkatha, and the present government is very aware of. It is the challenge

facing all of South Africa's international friends as well. I would emphasize to our South African colleagues here tonight, that Canadians -- our business community, academics, non-governmental organizations and professional bodies -- and all levels of government are ready to discuss the same commitment to building the new South Africa as we have to dismantle apartheid.

Township activists have told us that some foreign governments have been so dazzled by the promises from Pretoria that they are blind to the fact that very little has changed at the grass roots. For blacks in the townships, let alone in rural communities, apartheid is still alive and well. They are still pushed around by the security forces and by an indifferent or antagonistic white bureaucracy. They are still denied access to hospitals and schools, awarded inferior pensions, intimidated when they try to use the legally integrated community facilities. And now they fear that the international community is beginning to forget them.

The measures that the South African government has taken have certainly brought it a long way down the road to international respectability. Within months, we could see the fulfilment of all the conditions set out in the Possible Negotiating Concept of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group and reaffirmed in the Pretoria Minute. Here in Canada, both the Prime Minister and I have applauded the political leadership and courage shown by President de Klerk in making these pronouncements and we will continue to applaud each move he takes towards the dismantling of apartheid.

The February meeting of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers which I chaired was unanimous in agreeing that the undertakings to abolish legislative apartheid represented substantial progress. But we also noted that the prerequisite for progress in South Africa has always been the acceptance of the need for serious and meaningful negotiations. Unfortunately important obstacles blocking the launch of formal negotiations, notably the release of political prisoners, return of exiles and the revision of security legislation, remain in place. We concluded that we must maintain international pressure, including sanctions, until there is actual change and not just promised change. The Committee therefore proposed a "programmed management approach" to Commonwealth sanctions that would recognize the key milestones in political change in South Africa. In this way, changes in the application of sanctions will be linked not to statements of intent, but to the adoption of real and practical steps in the dismantling of apartheid.

I believe the London meeting represented an important step in the evolution of Commonwealth policy towards South Africa. The concept of the programmed management approach ensures that sanctions retain their relevance and role in

achieving a non-racial South Africa and as an incentive to all parties to sustain their progress towards a negotiated settlement. The concept will be further refined at our next meeting in India in July.

Commonwealth Ministers recognized that while pressure is necessary, it is not sufficient. We must increasingly look to the future, beyond the launch of formal negotiations to the creation of an apartheid-free society. This is the prize for which the struggle has been waged. I have been struck, in my discussions with other foreign leaders, by the priority they all accord to supporting the long-term development needs of South Africa. There is general agreement that South Africa is a country of extraordinary potential, a country which can contribute immensely to Africa and to the world. South Africans need not fear that they will be forgotten or ignored by the international community in the years ahead.

Economic exploitation lies at the heart of apartheid. There is widespread deprivation and hunger. The unemployment rate even in the urban areas is very high, while in rural areas it is catastrophic. Poverty, illiteracy, social inequality and violence will be its legacy long after legislative apartheid has been annulled.

Apartheid has been tragically costly in blighted lives and wasted human resources. By and large, black South Africans have been shut out of the experience of running industries and business. There are 10 times as many white university students as blacks in proportion to population -- 30 per thousand versus 3 per thousand. Figures show that only 36 per cent of black students passed the matriculation exams in 1990, compared to a pass rate for whites of 97 per cent. For 40 years, the system of Bantu Education prepared blacks for menial work. Over the past decade this situation has grown steadily worse due to high population growth and the almost complete breakdown of education for the generation of young South African blacks who spearheaded the popular unrest of the 1980s.

Most ominous of all, many young South Africans have lost the passionate belief in education that animated their elders. They subscribe to the slogan, "Pass one, pass all" -- however impractical in a modern industrial society. The distinguished community leader Dr. Mamphela Ramphele, who visited Canada a few weeks ago, called this attitude the creation of a "victim-culture." She warned that whole segments of society felt that they were owed a living simply because they had been cruelly victimized by apartheid. They do not yet accept Nelson Mandela's call that they must be educated to be liberated. They need to be recognized and valued. They need discipline and responsibility. And they need the hard-earned skills to assume their rightful role in society.

This week you are confronting this task head-on through your meetings on the crucial issue of Human Resource Development for a post-apartheid South Africa. The Commonwealth has played a catalytic role in developing an international response to the challenge of apartheid. It is equally active in preparing for the next chapter of South African history. It was at the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Meeting in Canberra, in 1989, that the Skills for South Africa Network was conceived; its objective is the linking and mobilization of non-governmental organizations throughout the Commonwealth to provide training and work experience for black South Africans.

And it was at the Abuja Meeting a year ago that Commonwealth Foreign Ministers commissioned the Experts Group to review the human resource development needs of a post-apartheid South Africa. Your work has assumed a high priority for the Commonwealth. I have every expectation that it will loom large once again at our next meeting in Delhi and at the Heads of Government meeting in Harare. I know that your findings will resonate not only in the Commonwealth but beyond its borders to all those committed to supporting South Africa in the crucial years ahead. I hope that your dialogue this week with distinguished South African experts on education will help them in their task of setting priorities and mobilizing resources for education and training. Most important, you are creating an atmosphere of hope in Southern Africa, by reassuring South Africans that they will not be forgotten in the next crucial stage of nation-building.

As a Canadian, I am particularly proud of the leadership of John Harker as Chairman of the Expert Group and Archbishop Ted Scott as Chairman of the Skills for South Africa Network. I am equally proud of the many Canadian organizations actively involved in human resource development in South Africa. With your indulgence, I want to mention briefly what the Canadian government is doing to help. In 1985, we launched the first phase of the Canadian Education Program for South Africa. It was then valued at \$8.2 million and was made up of four components: internal scholarships; small-scale initiatives in areas such as adult education and alternative schooling; labour education; and the in-Canada scholarship and training program. That latter program is implemented by the Southern Africa Education Trust Fund chaired by Archbishop Scott. Here in Canada, all levels of government, trade unions, business, universities and other institutions have risen to the challenge and offered, through the Trust Fund, work experience and educational opportunities to disadvantaged South Africans. The provision of placements and "in-kind" support has had a ripple effect that has involved many ordinary Canadians, and in turn increased public understanding and support for other Canadian and Commonwealth measures. The

second phase of this Canadian Education Program, valued at \$14.7 million, is now under way.

We are equally active in other sectors. We support a range of community development projects, both directly through the Canada Fund and through Canadian non-governmental organizations. The Dialogue Fund, valued this year at \$2.3 million, supports not only the negotiations process, but also a range of initiatives to bring about reconciliation and end the violence in South Africa. We have pledged \$5.85 million to assist with the return of exiles and resettlement of released political prisoners. We are engaged in this work across a broad front, and we intend to stay with this issue for the long haul: applying our funding, experience, pressure, and support to bring about an end to apartheid.

As I intimated earlier, it is one thing to learn the technical skills of a modern economy, but it is another, perhaps even more important challenge to encourage the attitudes of tolerance and co-operation which will be so essential in a post-apartheid South Africa. Apartheid has been dreadfully effective at doing what it says. It keeps people apart, and helps them fear and fight one another. Those walls of fear and hatred must be brought down. South Africa remains a violence-ridden society. There is growing political violence. Appalling as this violence has been in the last 18 months, it has not yet derailed the negotiations process. But South Africa's leaders have made it clear that unless this communal violence is brought under control, it could abort the promising but fragile process of dialogue which has been launched in South Africa.

Any number of causes have been cited for this violence: rivalry between political organizations; ethnic tension; competition for scarce resources in poor and overcrowded communities; manipulation by outside elements, the so-called third force; incompetent policing; local feuds and revenge killings. They have all contributed to what Archbishop Tutu has called a pervasive culture of violence in South Africa. He has urged all South Africans to stop blaming others and to accept their own responsibility for ending the violence. He has called on all South Africans to develop a culture of political tolerance; told the militants to throw away their weapons; enjoined the political parties to discipline their supporters; pleaded with political leaders to stop attacking one another; and demanded the police uphold the rule of law without fear or favour. This is a difficult prescription, but one we hope will be heeded. For unless peace is restored to the townships, the fragile vessel of peace may founder on the rocks of internecine violence.

Still there is reason to hope. There remains an extraordinary good will in South Africa, and a strong commitment

to reconciliation and peaceful resolution of conflict. South Africa is blessed with many leaders of vision. We are entering a period when the courage and imagination of all South Africans will be tested. Flexibility and patience will be required on all sides. Canada will do what we can to help the South African people traverse the chasm of violence and chaos and to build the solid foundations of freedom and prosperity in a new South Africa.