

LUM/003/0018/47 file AMC Office  
London

## African National Congress (South Africa)

PO Box 1791 Lusaka Zambia — Phone 72319

1979 — The Year of the Spear

Her Excellency,  
Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,  
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom  
of Great Britain & Northern Ireland,  
c/o The British High Commission,  
Lusaka,  
REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA.

Your Excellency,

We are informed that the British firm PLESSEY is currently training in the U.K. members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) in the use of computers which form part of a radar surveillance system produced by PLESSEY. This system, which will be acquired from PLESSEY, is for use by the SADF possibly at its military facility which is based at Devon in the Province of the Transvaal.

As you can well imagine, we received this information with a good deal of amazement and shock that British nationals are still permitted to provide the racist South African regime with the means to deal death and destruction to the people of our country and of Southern Africa as a whole.

We are amazed because we had thought that the United Kingdom was bound by the mandatory arms embargo imposed against apartheid South Africa by the United Nations Security Council not to assist in any way in building up the war potential of racist South Africa.

Yet the projected delivery of the PLESSEY equipment will serve exactly the purpose of improving the capability of the apartheid regime to pursue its oppressive and aggressive purposes in South and Southern Africa and will, within the terms set by the Security Council resolution, directly exacerbate the threat to international peace and security that emanates from apartheid South Africa.

We had, Your Excellency, taken to heart your words uttered only a few days ago that in its efforts to find an acceptable solution to the Rhodesian problem, the British government sought also to see peace established in Southern Africa. We would like to believe that these words were an expression of a sincere determination on the part of the British government to ensure by deed that its own actions and those of British nationals did in fact contribute to the establishment of peace in this region and not the escalation of the war situation which already exists.

At no time has any of the independent African States carried out military actions against South Africa nor are there plans for such actions. Your Excellency is surely aware of this. Yet there exists between apartheid South Africa and all the independent African States in this region an undeclared state of war, characterised by repeated acts of aggression

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against these African States by the South African armed forces acting both on their own and in collusion with the rebel Rhodesian forces. Our own people within South Africa have, like the British people in 1939, been forced to take up arms against a regime which is ineluctably oppressive, murderous and aggressive to bring about a result which guarantees democracy and peace for all the people of our country.

Taking all these considerations into account, it therefore came as a shock to us that members of the South African armed forces could be admitted into the United Kingdom, with the knowledge and approval of the government of the United Kingdom and admitted for purposes of further preparing them to carry out their assassins' mission against the people of the whole of Southern Africa.

The conclusion becomes inescapable that your government has elected to stand with the aggressor against the victims; to aid and encourage the white minority oppressor against the millions of African people in this region of Africa. The recent decision of your government enabling British oil companies to re-export oil to racist South Africa only serves to underline the justice of this conclusion.


In the name of the orphans and the widows, in the name of the thousands of the people of our country who have been killed with British arms for no reason other than that they are black and aspire like all human beings to a life of liberty, justice and equality, in the name of the millions of the oppressed people of South Africa and the people of Southern Africa as a whole, we appeal to the British government and to you as its head to desist from aiding and abetting the apartheid regime of South Africa.

Accordingly we call on the British government;

- + to expel the members of the South African Defence Force currently in Britain;
- + to forbid PLESSEY from supplying the South African Defence Force with any materials whatsoever;
- + to take all measures to ensure the observance of the arms embargo by all British nationals including British firms;
- + to prohibit the supply of oil and oil products to South Africa by British firms.

The establishment of peace in Southern Africa, an objective which all sane people in the world pursue, demands the implementation of these measures. We are convinced that the British government will respond positively and expeditiously to this appeal.

Yours sincerely,

  
ALFRED NZO  
Secretary-General

ALFRED NZO: Secretary-General.

August 3rd, 1979,  
LUSAKA.