

October 28, 1977

Draft letter from H.M.S. Reid, 'South African Test Explosions'

Citation:

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Summary:

H.M.S. Reid writes a draft letter to South African concerning the possibility that South African would perform non-nuclear test explosions at the site in the Kalahari Desert.

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Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

Mr Ferguson

Following our discussion, I attach a draft letter from you to Mr Vile covering a draft telegram to Pretoria.

HWS Reid

H W S Reid
Central & Southern African
Department

28 October 1977

cc: Sir A Duff
Mr Moberly
Mr Mansfield
ACDD
ESSD
PUSD

03/06/2010 14:28

Pr
3/11

SECRET

DRAFT

Type 1 +

CLASSIFICATION

To:- Martin Vile Esq
Private Secretary to Sir J Hunt

From
Private Secretary
Telephone No. Ext.

Department

G

Confidence

SOUTH AFRICAN TEST EXPLOSIONS

You told me that the Prime Minister had taken very seriously the report that the South Africans might be making next month one or more non-nuclear test explosions at their site in the Kalahari Desert and wished to send a warning to Mr Vorster which might take the form of a personal message.

We have consulted Sir D Scott who is here on leave. His report was based on an informal conversation with Mr Brand Fourie, Secretary for External Affairs. Sir D Scott advises against a personal message from the Prime Minister Mr Vorster bypassing Mr Fourie because this might severely damage Sir D Scott's relationship with Mr Fourie.

Sir D Scott advises that the message should be sent through our Chargé d'Affaires in Pretoria, Mr David Summerhayes with instructions for him to approach Mr Fourie.

I attach a draft telegram accordingly.

03/06/2010 14:28

Department..... CSAD
Drafted by
(Block Capitals)..... HMS REID
Tel. Extn..... 5189

OUTWARD
TELEGRAM

Security Classification
SECRET
Precedence
IMMEDIATE
DESKBY Z

FOR
COMMS. DEPT.
USE

Despatched

(Date).....
(Time)..... Z

POSTBY Z

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin)..... Z(G.M.T.) (Restrictive Prefix)
(Security Class.) SECRET (Caveat)
(Codeword)..... (Privacy Marking)
(Deskby)..... Z

TO IMMEDIATE PRETORIA Tel. No. of
(precedence) (post)

AND TO (precedence/post).....

AND SAVING TO.....

REPEATED TO (for info)

SAVING TO (for info)

[TEXT]

NOTHING TO BE

03/06/2010 14:28

2. You should ask Fourie to tell Vorster that the Prime Minister considers that ~~when~~^{it} it becomes known that explosions have taken place at the Kalahari site any statement that the e_xplosions were non-nuclear would be likely to be discounted not only in Africa but in

/the world

SECRET

the world at large and even in this country; and that the political consequences could be far-reaching and damaging. The Prime Minister therefore urges Mr Vorster to consider all this carefully and not to allow the explosions to take place.

03/06/2010 14:29