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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Deputy Undersecretary

~~SECRET~~

June 14, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: S - The Secretary  
THROUGH: S/S  
FROM: G - U. Alexis Johnson  
SUBJECT ; U.S. Policy Towards South Africa

Much as we disapprove of South Africa's internal policy of apartheid and disastrous though we feel it eventually will be, I suggest that it is important we also take into consideration the following factors before moving toward a full embargo on the supply of arms to South Africa, as recommended in the attached memorandum from Governor Williams.

1. South Africa continues to be friendly and cooperative with us in a wide range of defense matters such as landing rights, seismograph and tracking stations, and port and dock facilities, all of which are important to our missile development and to the position of our Navy and Air Force in the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean areas. If developments in the Near East were to deny us the use of the Suez Canal, these of course would be even more important.
2. The present policy, which attempts to draw the line between arms which are capable of being used against an internal uprising and those useful for defense against external attack, though probably not entirely satisfactory, at least gives us some flexibility and enables us to adapt our policy to changing circumstances. A total arms embargo would seem to go far toward equating a friendly South Africa with the Sino-Soviet bloc.
3. We most recently examined this issue in your memorandum of March 15 to the President, which he approved, recommending a U.S. indication of willingness to sell two or three modern conventional submarines to South Africa. A total arms embargo would of course reverse that decision.
4. Unless all Western arms suppliers, including Sweden and Switzerland, would also agree not to supply arms to South Africa, any total arms embargo on our part would only be a gesture of limited effect that would lose for us the advantages and leverage of our present flexible policy. While, on the one hand, it might tend to please the other African states, nothing short of a full economic embargo would satisfy them, and, on the other hand, it might well lose us whatever advantages exist in our present relationship with South Africa without materially affecting its policy on apartheid.

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Copies to: M - Mr. Harriman  
AF - Mr. Williams

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