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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

August 23, 1977

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Warren Christopher, Acting *WC*

Lagos Conference. The South African nuclear issue came up frequently during the plenary session today. Shawn McBride, Ireland's maverick delegate, made a speech this morning in which he asserted that the South African Government had already exploded a nuclear explosive device. Speeches by African delegates referred to Western cooperation with South Africa in the nuclear field.

The Soviet representative will address the conference tomorrow. Originally scheduled to speak today, Andy asked for a delay until Thursday to be able to comment on and respond to the speeches of other delegates.

Law of the Sea. Elliot Richardson has informed us that he would be willing to continue to serve as principal U.S. representative at the next session of the Law of the Sea Conference scheduled for February 1978 and to handle advance preparations -- if you wish to have him do so. Cy and I think it is important to have Richardson continue in these difficult and complex talks, at least through the next session which may last two months. If it is agreeable with you, we will tell him that you share our desire that he continue through the next session of the Conference. No resubmission to the Senate would be required.

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Korean Military Compensation Package. We and Defense have been looking carefully into how to handle the Korean military compensation package with the Congress. We believe that we should request special legislation authorizing the no cost transfer to South Korea of equipment from the U.S. ground forces which are to be withdrawn. We plan to consult with key legislative staff next week on the prospects for such a bill. We do not plan to ask the Congress to approve additional FMS sales credits outside the regular budget cycle.

Repatriation of U.S. Citizens from Cuba. It now appears that the first plane load of U.S. citizen repatriates and their families will not be ready to leave Cuba before next week. We had hoped to bring back the first plane load this Thursday, but the Swiss Embassy reports that many of the citizens interviewed so far may decide to remain in Cuba. Others are difficult to reach, do not have proper documentation, or are taking extra time to settle their personal affairs.

Todman Trip. Terry Todman's trip to Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay had a significant impact in all four countries. Much of the interest centered on human rights, and his meetings with government leaders were taken as a sign that our policies are serious and non-discriminatory. He met freely with opposition groups who viewed the visit as a manifestation of concern and a cause for hope.

good

Although we should not attempt to take public credit for concessions, our concern for human rights has stirred domestic forces and created internal pressures for change in Latin America. Abuses continue and the administration of justice remains quite weak everywhere, but the direction of change is now generally positive throughout the Southern cone. Our challenge in the months ahead will be to demonstrate our support for human rights in ways that will encourage further positive evolution.

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