

MEETING BETWEEN THE HON. R F BOTHA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION AND AMBASSADOR HERMAN NICKEL OF THE UNITED STATES : CAPE TOWN : 16 MAY 1983

Ambassador Nickel, accompanied by Mr Dennis Keogh, called at their request, on the Minister at 1.30 pm. on 16 May 1983. Mr Steward from the Department was also present.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL said that he assumed that Ambassador Fourie had already filled the Minister in on the American response to South Africa's letter of 4 May 1983. The letter had been approved at a high level and was drafted in a constructive spirit.

THE MINISTER noted that the withdrawal of the Cubans from Angola was not the only remaining obstacle. There were others as well. He had, however, noted that Dr Crocker was prepared to live with the formulation that this was the only "major" remaining obstacle.

THE MINISTER went on to say that he assumed that the American letter did not mean that South Africa was expected to sit back with its arms folded while SWAPO killed the people of South West Africa.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL said that the United States would not take issue with the notion of the right of the people of South West Africa to self-defence.

THE MINISTER said that it was not clear what the United States was trying to say in its letter. He took issue with

the American understanding of South Africa's position on page 5 which lead them to the conclusion that South African military operations were making it more difficult to get "the Angolan Government to come forward with a timetable on Cuban withdrawal". With regard to the US statement that the "uncertain military situation" had made it necessary to postpone the next exchange of views, the Minister stated that it was too bad if this did not lead to further talks with Mr Eagleburger. South Africa could live with that possibility. The Minister also stated that the reference in the South African letter to the "middle of June" had not been intended as a deadline. However, it seemed that the US was saying that it did not matter how long this process lasted. In the meantime the US evidently expected South Africa to pay for the running of the Territory. This was not acceptable.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL replied that this could obviously not be an open-ended process. The US had serious problems as well which would make this impossible. The US was concerned about its diplomatic contacts and believed that it was important to make its position absolutely clear.

Dr Crocker had been upset by South Africa's insinuations that the US was trying to find an excuse to pin the blame for the failure of the exercise on South Africa. The US simply wished to make sure that nothing would interfere with the delicate process of negotiations.

THE MINISTER repeated that he did not really understand the US message. What was South Africa supposed to think particularly in the light of the recent decision of the US

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Congress to take action against the Republic. This had been completely unasked for.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL replied that half of the sixth floor of the State Department was working hard to have the legislation reversed. It would be very difficult on the House side, although it would be easier in the Senate. The South African Embassy was also busy lobbying against the legislation. The US and South Africa should work together in this regard. The main purpose of the US letter was to convey the message that nothing must be done to complicate the diplomatic process and that deadlines are not helpful. Turning to the question of Mozambique Ambassador Nickel said that the US strongly favoured South Africa's bilateral contacts with Maputo. It would be difficult for the US to give any guarantees but it would be prepared to look at any agreement to see whether a constructive role could be played. Ambassador Nickel asked how far South Africa had come with an agreement to prevent the use of each country's territory by hostile elements. He wished to know whether South Africa had been able to come up with some version of a non-aggression pact.

THE MINISTER replied that the recent bilateral talks with Mozambique had been influenced negatively by the Schoeman affair. Mozambique had falsified the facts and had spread a story throughout the world which, for all he knew, might be believed by US Senators and Congressmen. Mozambique was a Marxist State. It was in trouble and one could not rely on the sincerity of its interest in peace. The Schoeman case reinforced that view. Schoeman's record was such that

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any normal police force would have realized that he was a criminal straight away. He was ill. He was not normal - his sister had said so. Now, after having held him for a year, Mozambique decided to make use of him two to three days before the meeting with South Africa.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL stated that nobody had been taken in by this ploy. But Mozambique was evidently interested in starting up a joint group with South Africa. It would be recalled that it was after the Schoeman matter had been raised with the Mozambicans that the Minister had put his question to the Americans concerning guarantees.

THE MINISTER replied that he was not prepared to fly to Komatipoort every other week. He would, however, recommend that a joint group should be put together. Nevertheless, he didn't have much hope. The Mozambicans had had Schoeman for more than a year.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL pointed out that the Mozambicans had been helpful in allowing the South African Police to take Schoeman's fingerprints.

THE MINISTER asked why South Africa should be grateful to Mozambique for letting it take Schoeman's fingerprints. Had he not insisted upon this the Mozambicans would probably have quietly killed him.

THE MINISTER said he would probably appoint officials to talk with Mozambique. It would be better to move toward a more peaceful situation, but if one looked at the economic realities they could not win in that country.

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AMBASSADOR NICKEL said that the US was prepared to do something. Hunger was the number one problem. It was prepared to play a constructive role but needed the cooperation of the parties.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL then asked if there had been any progress on Cape Verde III.

THE MINISTER set out South Africa's position and stated that South Africa was still awaiting Angola's reply. He mentioned that he had recently sent Mr Steward to the Cape Verde Islands to bring their Government up to date with recent developments. There ensued a brief exchange concerning an American misunderstanding that the Minister had referred to "South Africa's office in Luanda" during the preceding meeting. It was pointed out that South Africa has no such office and the Americans must have heard incorrectly.

Referring to another point which had been raised in the preceding meeting, AMBASSADOR NICKEL assured the Minister that the US had not decided to "sick the British onto South Africa". This was not part of the US arsenal.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL also recalled that there had been some confusion with regard to the travel facilities of homeland leaders. He had clarified the position and had established that the US is indeed prepared to consider applications from homeland citizens who hold South African passports.

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THE MINISTER replied that although he did not necessarily like this position, it was clear.

THE MINISTER said that South Africa would look at the American letter and let the US have its response.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL mentioned that the Secretary-General had been "touching all bases" before the forthcoming Security Council meeting. He was sincere and seemed to be trying to calm things down. It would assist him if South Africa could furnish him with a positive report on the progress which it had made in respect of Resolution 435. He was thinking particularly of the technical issues which had been resolved last year and of a reaffirmation of South Africa's position in respect of acceptance of Resolution 435.

THE MINISTER said that Genl. Haig had asked South Africa to accept Resolution 435 "as amended above" i.e. including provision for the withdrawal of the Cubans. Judge Clark had asked him at a hotel in Cape Town if it would change things if the US could bring about the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola. South Africa had said yes and had cooperated with the US. If this was now becoming too heavy for the US - if it was too much of a burden and if the US wished to shed it, it would be its decision. If this would ease the US embarrassment in being associated with South Africa then it could get out of the relationship. If the US felt that it was against its interests to use its veto in the Security Council to protect South Africa from sanctions then it should not do so. We would then see

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about the outcome and decide whether the price for US interests had been too high.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL replied that the US was much more optimistic. It was not dejected.

THE MINISTER stated that South Africa did not want to hear that it was being protected. The US might one day have another Government to deal with.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL assured the Minister that the US relationship with South Africa was not a burden. US and SA interests coincided. That is why the US was prepped to fight battles in defence of its southern Africa policies. If the US and South Africa succeeded in Namibia other problems would be much more easily resolved.

D W STEWARD

CAPE TOWN

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