

SECRET

DISCUSSION BETWEEN MINISTER PHIRI OF ZAMBIA AND
SOUTH AFRICAN REPRESENTATIVES : ROAN HOUSE,
LUSAKA : 25 JUNE 1984

At about 19h30 of the evening of 25 June 1984 while we were waiting for our meeting with the Angolans to take place, Minister Phiri visited us at Roan House where we had spent most of the day. We soon entered into a friendly discussion with him on the purpose of our visit to Lusaka. We told him of the circumstances which had led to the proposed meeting with the Angolans and pointed out that it had been they who had suggested that the meeting take place in Lusaka on the 25th of June 1984. We said that South Africa had asked to send an emissary to the Angolans to express our great concern over recent developments and to find out whether the Angolans were able to respond to the proposals which we had made to them on the 21st of May 1984. South Africa also wished to express its deep concern about the increase in the number of violations of the Lusaka Agreement as well as the fact that SWAPO elements were still present in the area-in-question. In addition, since the Lusaka Agreement had been signed it had become clear that far from helping to establish peace there had been an increase in the number of incidents which had taken place inside South West Africa. South Africa was also worried about a number of statements which had recently been made by the Angolans. President Dos Santos had apparently criticised South Africa for the slowness of the withdrawal of its forces from southern Angola. However, this was due solely to the continuing presence of SWAPO in the area-in-question. South Africa was also unhappy with a

reported statement by Paulo Jorge, the Angolan Foreign Minister, to the effect that Angola had no responsibility in terms of the Lusaka Agreement to control SWAPO.

It also seemed as though Zambia was adopting a harder line in its statements effecting South Africa and South West Africa. For example, President Kaunda had recently criticised European leaders for having received Prime Minister Botha during his recent tour of Europe. South Africa was deeply disappointed by this attitude. After all, Prime Minister Botha had been explaining to European leaders what South Africa and Zambia had been trying to achieve in southern Africa. He had represented the interests and concerns of Black Africans. He had asked for greater understanding of their problems and for increased aid. South Africa had suggested that the exports of Black African countries should be treated more fairly in European markets. It was incomprehensible that President Kaunda should be opposed to this process. President Kaunda had also recently stated that he had no objection to the continuing presence of Cuban forces in Angola. This seemed to be most unhelpful. In addition, Dr Lisulo, the Zambian representative, at a recent anti-Apartheid meeting which had been organized by the United Nations in New York, had called for comprehensive sanctions against South Africa. All of these actions seemed to be inconsistent with the objectives which South Africa thought that it had been trying to achieve in its dialogue with Zambia.

Minister Phiri replied that Zambia had set out its position on these questions in the letter which President Kaunda had addressed to Prime Minister Botha on the 5th of May.

Zambia had said that it differed from South Africa's view that the problems of the region were caused by foreign intervention and by economic factors. Zambia believed that the problems of the region were caused by the fact that Namibia was not yet independent and by South Africa's policy of Apartheid.

Genl Van der Westhuizen and I then asked Minister Phiri whether South Africa's policy of Apartheid was responsible for the current clashes between the Matabele and Mashona in Zimbabwe. Was Apartheid the cause of the chaos in Mozambique and Angola? Were we responsible for the situation in Zaïre and the collapse of the Tanzanian economy? Had we been responsible for the wars in Biafra and in Ethiopia?

Minister Phiri replied that in most cases the problems which we had mentioned could be traced either to South Africa or to the activities of the former colonial powers. For example, if Portugal had not suppressed the peoples of Angola and Mozambique they would have become independent in a more responsible fashion. If the CIA have not caused the assassination of President Lomumbo, Zaïre would have become a more democratic society.

Minister Phiri said that he believed that democracy was the solution to Africa's problems and also to the problems of South Africa.

We asked him in how many countries in Africa there were with democratic systems. We asked him whether he felt that the highly complex problems of South Africa could be solved

if the pluralistic nature of our society was not taken into account. We pointed out that many countries with complex populations took cognisance of this reality in their constitutional systems. For example, Yugoslavia with which Zambia has excellent relations, has states for its different constituent peoples, the Serbs, the Croats, the Slovenes etc. The same was true in Switzerland and for that matter in the Soviet Union. Why did the Zambians think that it was somehow immoral or incorrect for South Africa to follow a similar course? The fact was that South Africa was an artificial entity whose borders had been determined by European imperialists and not by local circumstances. Those borders contained several different national groups and communities each with an unquestionable right to self-determination. The Whites constituted a national group and also had an unquestionable right to self-determination. The Whites did not deny that the other nationalities had similar rights. We looked forward to the day when all South Africa's peoples would enjoy political rights and when we would work together within a cooperative association of States. What was so wrong with this idea?

Minister Phiri replied that in Zambia it had been their ideal to work away from tribalism. He for example came from the Western Province and was a Bemba. However, he was a Zambian first. The important thing in Africa was to create a new sense of national unity. The rights of communities could be protected in written constitutions.

We then asked him whether Zambia still has the same constitution that it had when it became independent? We pointed out that very few independent African States still

retain their original constitutions. Did he really expect us to put our faith in constitutions which could be so easily torn up? Our particular national group had a democratic system including a free parliament, a free press and free economic and cultural institutions. The only way that these institutions could be guaranteed was by the maintenance of our right to self-determination. We were perfectly prepared to accept that other nationalities and communities inside South Africa should have a right to decide how they wished to be governed. In the meantime we would continue to cooperate with one another economically since we shared a single economy.

We left Minister Phiri with the idea that regardless of what Zambia's views might be, there was nothing immoral or impractical in South Africa's policy of advocating a pluralistic solution to the complexed problems which confront us.

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