

SECRET

DISCUSSION BETWEEN STATE PRESIDENT P W BOTHA AND DR CHESTER CROCKER ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, ON MONDAY 11 FEBRUARY, 1985 AT 11h00

ALSO PRESENT:

SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION

Mr R F Botha : Minister of Foreign Affairs

Genl. MA de M Malan : Minister of Defence

Dr B G Fourie : South African Ambassador to  
Washington

Mr A L Manley : Office of the Minister of Foreign  
Affairs

UNITED STATES DELEGATION

His Excellency H Nickel : United States Ambassador in  
South Africa

Mr R Gelbard : Director, Southern African  
Affairs, State Department

THE STATE PRESIDENT welcomed Dr Crocker and his delegation and said that he had been informed by his Colleague, Mr R F Botha that Dr Crocker had a special need to see him.

DR CROCKER thanked the State President for seeing him. He had been asked by President Reagan and Secretary of State Shultz to convey a few points to the President. President Reagan and all of those most closely connected with southern African affairs in the United States were deeply conscious of President Botha's task and the many bold moves which he had made and was making. These moves were also very

important for the United States of America. The United States was conscious that South Africa was an important friend and partner and was conscious of the leadership rôle being played by President Botha.

The United States was not about to change its policy towards southern Africa. President Reagan had been angered by the distortions and misunderstandings of United States policy and had spoken out publicly in the United States to clarify the issue. He believed that the present United States policy was the right policy. It was necessary to have clarity in order to win the battles in Congress.

President Reagan was not a believer in public grandstanding or rhetoric but preferred to use the proper channels between States. He would do everything to calm down the atmosphere and stabilise constructive relations between the two countries. He was following developments very closely. The United States wished President Botha the best in the policies which he had chartered for his country. South Africa and the United States had shaped history in the past 18 months. The Soviets were on the defensive in southern Africa although there had been some loss of momentum.

The Soviet Union was entering its third succession crisis in a short space of time. This had slowed down the decision-making process. It opened up opportunities which must be taken advantage of. The uncertainty of the Cubans also opened up opportunities. The United States saw opportunities in the rôle which President Mobutu could play in pursuing channels of communication between Unita and the MPLA. Castro was feeling the pinch and was on the defensive in Central America and in Africa. The United States would not wish to bring him to the bargaining table but could capitalise on his desire to be seen to be on his best behaviour.

The United States Government had made a commitment of \$60 million to Mozambique and had started a modest military programme. They had invited President Machel to pay a visit to the USA to bolster him while the heat was on. Nkomati must be consolidated and peace must come to Mozambique. It was necessary to find a way to stabilise the southern area around Maputo. Dr Crocker was aware that South Africa was looking at certain ideas and the United States also had certain ideas. Nobody had a monopoly of wisdom in this regard but more needed to be done to boost President Machel's confidence. The United States wished to compliment President Botha on the very strong statement which he made on 17 January 1985.

Dr Crocker had brought certain ideas with him on Angola and Namibia which he had already discussed with Ministers Botha and Malan but he felt that the State President might first wish to respond to the issues which he had addressed.

PRESIDENT BOTHA thanked Dr Crocker for his brief outline of the United States' attitude. Dr Crocker had referred to bold moves which President Botha had taken but he did not think that they were so bold but a natural development of policy. They were the consequence of what the South African Government believed in. President Botha had a feeling and this was a feeling which was growing in South Africa that some members of the international community were gradually forming the impression that they could press South Africa into making certain moves. If that was the impression then they were not only embarrassing the South African Government but making its task more difficult.

President Botha took into account the ideas and views of friends. South Africa did have friends in the West but they were not necessarily represented in governments. He did not believe that one government in the West was a friend of South Africa. In international affairs there were no friends, only interests. Western Governments would drop

South Africa when it suited them. It was a Republican Government which had dropped South Africa in Angola in 1975. It was a question of once bitten twice shy.

Certain promises were made to President Botha by a previous United States delegation led by Judge Bill Clarke. He had spoken of the serpent's head which would be destroyed and that the rest of the body in Angola would be withdrawn. Nothing had materialised in this regard either. It was now a case of twice bitten and four times shy.

President Botha said that he sometimes asked himself what really was meant by "constructive engagement". Constructive engagement was rather an awkward policy for South Africa. The Soviet Union shouted at South Africa in the UN and other international forums and was applying an arms embargo against South Africa. But so was the United States of America. Opposition members of the United States Senate came to South Africa and almost created a circus here. President Botha could not see any member of the President's Council or the South African Parliament ganging up with forces in the United States of America to embarrass the United States Government.

The South African Government had to listen to members of the US Government referring to the abhorrent South African policy but South Africa refrained from referring to those aspects of US internal policy which it found abhorrent. This was why South Africa put a question mark behind constructive engagement. It was "constructive engagement" as long as it served United States' interests. The United States Ambassador had said as much on South African TV. In fact on most issues affecting South Africa there was not a great difference between United States and Soviet policies. The Soviet Union traded with South Africa and wanted to increase that trade. So did the United States of America. The United States might put forward its UN veto as an argument but that did not give them the right to force South

Africa in a certain direction. It must be made clear that the decisions on what was going to happen in South Africa were going to be taken by South Africa's leaders without pressure from outside. President Botha was coming under pressure from well-meaning South Africans who were very suspicious of constructive engagement.

This morning he had received a report on a discussion between a South African delegation and President Kaunda. They had taken a personal letter from the President to President Kaunda. President Kaunda had been very candid. He had said that what Africa wanted was that the white South African nation should accept one man, one vote and should drop their claim to self-determination. It had taken a long time for any leader to say this to South Africa so explicitly.

President Botha had a feeling that the objectives of constructive engagement were similar. If that was the case then the sooner the South African Government gained clarity on the issue, the better. Senator Kennedy had at least made his point of view very clear in this respect. He had left the South African Government in no doubt about what he would want to see, namely the same result as the rest of Africa. If that was what the United States Government wanted and what they foresaw, then he must tell Dr Crocker that it would not happen. South Africans would fight for their self-determination.

On disinvestment, he wished to say that he had lately received a number of prominent US citizens who had interests in South Africa and who shared our view on current developments. President Botha had told them that he thought that a disinvestment policy should be implemented by those in the United States who campaigned for it with all the disastrous consequences it would entail for southern Africa and even for South Africa. But the protagonists in the United States should show the moral courage to take those investments and put them elsewhere in Africa. They

could start with Zambia and Zimbabwe, whose policies they did not find abhorrent. They could in fact start anywhere else in Africa.

It must be stressed that nothing would come of constructive engagement which was not acceptable to the leaders and people of South Africa. If we were clear on this then he hoped that the two countries would move to a stage where they could be direct and honest with each other.

When Judge Clarke and Dr Crocker had been in South Africa two years ago they had asked for South Africa's bottom line on Angola and South West Africa. South Africa had done so but then the United States had added that the Cubans should first leave Angola. South Africa had added that they should not be replaced by any other foreign forces. In addition South Africa had been told that the serpent's head would be destroyed. Nothing had happened since then. Swapo was no longer of concern to South Africa. South Africa was keeping them where they should be kept. Swapo was no longer a military force which South Africa could not deal with. During his visit to western Europe last year President Botha had asked the European leaders to take over the burden of South West Africa. Mrs Thatcher had said that he must be an optimist - the other leaders had just smiled. In other words the skunk' of southern Africa with its abhorrent policies must continue to keep the people of South West Africa on their feet during the worst drought in living memory. The international community was still interested in Resolution 435 and accused South Africa of not being prepared to accept the Resolution. Surely the international community preferred to implement Resolution 435 and accept the consequences and the fact that the people of South West Africa could not look after themselves economically. The first drought that struck an independent Namibia would mean that they would come to South Africa for assistance.

In the meantime the Cubans sat tight destroying another country. The United States of America buys oil from Cabinda and Angola uses this money to pay the Cubans.

South Africa would like to see a stable Mozambique. It was in South Africa's interest for Maputo Harbour to work properly again as well as the Railway and Cahora Bassa and for food to be produced again for the millions on the verge of starvation. There must be clarity on the question of stability. When the Portuguese were still in Mozambique, they were not in proper control of the whole of the country. Machel is not in proper control and RENAMO will not have proper control. \$60 million of American aid is not going to bring about stability and is not going to get rid of the Soviet influence in Mozambique. The Soviet Union had established itself all over Africa. The United States should tell President Kaunda that his one party state policy was abhorrent and that the Russians should go. He would not do it. So why pick on South Africa.

Despite what happened to South Africa in Angola in 1975 and 1976 and what the United States did to South Africa, President Botha would forgive the United States of America because the first thing that Dr Kissinger said to him when they met at Libertas in 1983 was to say that he owed President Botha an apology. The South African Government would forgive but would never forget and President Botha had told Dr Kissinger this. The same applied to the serpent's head.

President Botha had called in the business leaders of South Africa to talk about Mozambique shortly after the signing of the Nkomati Accord. He had asked them to talk to Mozambique leaders and to see what they could do to help. South Africa's Agricultural Union leaders had also been to Mozambique for discussions. President Botha had only last week met a prominent group of South African business leaders who had said that they were disillusioned because there was

no security or stability in Mozambique. Until that happened they could not go into Mozambique.

If he understood President Reagan's message correctly - and he had the greatest respect for President Reagan - he would like to see South Africa taking stronger action in Mozambique. But how could this be expected when there was still an arms embargo against South Africa. The Soviet Union had painted the USA into a corner on the arms embargo but the Soviet Union did not give a damn for the arms embargo because they had ways and means of breaking it. On the other hand the United States stuck strictly to the embargo and yet expected South Africa to take stronger action in Mozambique. Moreover President Reagan could stand up tomorrow and make speeches about South Africa's abhorrent policies.

The stronger action required of South Africa could only mean a physical presence in Mozambique. But why should South Africa do this when its presence in Angola is discussed and condemned internationally and even in the USA. President Botha said that he would only consider a stronger presence if he had a written request from President Machel in which he said that he could not cope and that he needed South Africa to help him to maintain his harbour, railways, electricity supply etc. South Africa had a direct interest in these facilities and South Africa only had "interests". This is what the American Ambassador had said on television.

AMBASSADOR NICKEL said that he had been quoting President Botha.

PRESIDENT BOTHA replied that the two sides then at least agreed on one point.

Either President Machel must make the request or President Reagan must make the request and President Botha knew that the US Congress would not allow him to do that. He



therefore found it most difficult to be positive on most of these issues. Unless greater clarity was obtained on most of these issues and the US stopped using vague phrases on the relations between the two countries, President Botha could not see where it would lead.

DR CROCKER said that the President had put much on the table and had spoken with much candour and he would wish to respond in kind. What therefore did US policy mean for southern Africa and South Africa? The USA was pursuing its own interests and was not running a church organisation. It was running the external policy of a great nation. The US had interests in southern Africa. Southern Africa was not the most important region in the world to the USA but was still very important. President Reagan had put his credibility at stake and had put much effort into their southern Africa Policy. The US was seeking stability and wished to reduce and even eliminate violence in southern Africa. The present Administration was the first Administration in decades to do this. The Administration was saying that boundaries would have to be respected in both directions. There was violence in both directions. The US Government had spoken bluntly to South Africa's neighbours in this connection and had paid for this doctrine.

If there was crossborder and internal violence, the economies would decline and trade and investment would decline. The US wanted the region to prosper and grow. The US Government believed that historically the mistakes of 1975 and 1976 had to be rectified. The objective of the US was to get the USSR out of the region with the tools at its disposal. South Africa had some tools which were not available to the USA and visa versa. Getting the Soviets out was a common objective. They were now more on the defensive than they had been in a decade. Angola was a mess and the Soviet Union was only pouring weapons into Angola because they paid for them in hard currency. The Soviets had no illusions about Angola and the US and South

African Governments could accomplish something positive if they could get the Soviets off the hook. Five years ago the frontline states had been encouraged by Moscow to adopt their phoney confrontational politics. This position had now changed.

The United States of America was a multi-racial democracy. It was a continental island blessed by nature and history. No President could ignore the rôle which race had played in American history. He had to speak to his own constituency and less than 10% of all the politicians in the USA would not criticise apartheid. President Reagan wanted to destroy the Democratic Party alliance which had had a stranglehold on American politics since the 1930's. The US had no prescriptions for South Africa. Ambassador Nickel had said this during his television interview. He had used broad concepts such as "it was up to South Africans themselves to decide their future" and "the consent of the governed" and "a just society" and the US Administration would continue to do so. The unique aspects of South Africa were recognised and the US would continue to encourage the process which President Botha had launched. President Reagan would do all in his power to resist the efforts of ill-advised people. He had every intention of sticking to what he had said. The USA was not seeking any right to force South Africa's hand or to dictate to the South African Government. He knew he spoke for Ronald Reagan when he said that the events of December 1984 would not happen again. President Reagan did not want to be seen to take credit on South Africa. That was phoney politics. The US needed President Botha's help to get credit for all South Africans whether they were white, black, coloured or asian. If credit was to go to any foreigners then it must go to the right foreigners. It was disheartening that so much notice had been taken of Teddy Kennedy who was a failed politician from a failed party.

What the US was trying to do was to provide the opportunity for South Africa to shape its own future free from military

intervention. That was the present US Administration's policy.

PRESIDENT BOTHA said that he took note of the external policy of a great nation. It was not only a great nation in terms of numbers but also in other terms. It was also a big nation and big nations did not have feelings for small nations. They were the enemies of small nations. This is what history taught. The US might be a great nation but if a small nation got in its way, it would trample on it. President Botha knew that the US was a multi-racial country. It was a galaxy of nations but it was not right for Americans to fight their internal policies on South African issues. South Africa was a handy example to throw around in order to debate internal American issues. Why not pick on the rest of Africa which had made a total mess. Their policies were not abhorrent to the USA because their problems were not an internal issue in the United States. President Kaunda's policies were not abhorrent to the USA. The United States obviously applied double standards. This was what South Africa objected to. South Africa could go the same way as the rest of Africa.

Senator Kennedy had come to South Africa to strengthen his position as a politician.

DR CROCKER said that the Administration was trying to fight these people themselves.

PRESIDENT BOTHA said that he wanted to warn the United States against claiming credit for developments in southern Africa.

Regarding violence, he wanted to say that South Africa was also helping to stamp out the violence created by the Soviet Union. The USA had left South Africa in the lurch when it was at the gates of Luanda. President Reagan had written to President Botha saying that the United States wanted to

stop the Soviet Union in southern Africa but Russia was still making advances. They had large numbers of tanks in some of the States north of South Africa. It was only South Africa which was really trying to stop the Soviet Union. President Botha could not help but leave the impression that he did not believe in the good intentions of the West. They were too pre-occupied with their own problems to worry about South and southern Africa. They were subsidising agriculture in Europe in order to sell their products cheaply behind the Iron Curtain and were shouting at South Africa in order to hide their own problems. Why should South Africa pay the price for Europe's dilemma?

South Africa was not being supported as a regional power to influence the stability, peace and economic development of southern Africa. South Africa could dictate peace in the region but was not being allowed to do so because of the unnecessary interference of the super-powers.

DR CROCKER said that there was no doubt that there were big nations and small nations in the international community. There were also differences between the United States of America and the US Administration. South Africa and the US Administration needed to underscore their common goals. The two countries had different kinds of power. The Soviets were not the same as they were four years ago. The United States was able to spend its way on arms into deeper debt than the Soviet Union was. The United States was today a global naval power. They were gaining the upper hand in the Carribean. But they wished to go beyond that.

Regarding Mozambique the United States was not suggesting that it should deny South Africa the means to pacify Mozambique. The two delegations had been discussing the means of sending a clear message to President Machel. It was important for South Africa to take steps against Renamo in South Africa. This would be a clear signal .....

PRESIDENT BOTHA asked whether Dr Crocker could tell him who the Renamo people were in South Africa. DR CROCKER replied that he did not have the names.

PRESIDENT BOTHA said that Renamo was operating out of Portugal. He had said publicly that the South African Government was not supporting Renamo. He had spoken to his Security Service Chiefs and they had all given him an assurance that Renamo was receiving no aid from the South African Government. He accepted those assurances. Now he was told about a "grotto" and aircraft which had been spotted on radar screens. All he asked was for Mozambique to supply him with one photograph of a South African aircraft flying over Mozambique without permission and he would take action. South African aircraft were continually flying over Mozambique with the permission of the Civil Aviation Authorities. This was Africa and all he heard was ghost stories.

DR CROCKER said that he had been careful not to bring any charges against South Africa because he did not have the evidence. He asked what he could do to assist.

PRESIDENT BOTHA asked why the United States was so concerned about Mozambique. It was because the US was concerned that the Soviet Union was getting firmly established in Mozambique.

DR CROCKER agreed but added that they were also concerned that South Africa's relationship with Mozambique would deteriorate.

PRESIDENT BOTHA said that if the US really wanted to assist they would cancel the arms embargo. They had been painted into a corner from which they could not extricate themselves.

DR CROCKER said that he was aware that the two countries sometimes disappointed each other. Mistakes had been made in the past. He wished that parts of history could be rewritten. But the situation had improved over the past four years.

PRESIDENT BOTHA asked why Dr Crocker allowed his President to talk to the South African Government about its policies, then to Bishop Tutu and then to Chief Buthelezi. Bishop Tutu had no influence. Chief Buthelezi had said as much but the South African Government could have told Dr Crocker that.

DR CROCKER said that President Reagan had been very impressed with Chief Buthelezi.

PRESIDENT BOTHA said that people claimed that Chief Buthelezi was a stooge but he could give the assurance that he was no stooge. He still had in the back of his mind that what the US wanted for South Africa was similar to what President Kaunda had conveyed to the South African delegation which had just been to see him. The US did not like what South Africa was about because South Africa could get difficult but he wanted to say to Dr Crocker that he did not know quite how difficult South Africa could get.

DR CROCKER said that they were trying to get South Africa's arguments on "double standards" across and that they would find new ways to get it across. There were democratic institutions in South Africa which were to be found nowhere else in Africa. A higher standard is upheld for South Africa than for other African countries. This may be unfair but it was true. The USA saw South Africa as part of the west. "We see you as being different."

PRESIDENT BOTHA said that in certain circles in South Africa the question was asked whether South Africa was really still part of the west and this question would be put more and more often.

DR CROCKER said that he hoped that the South African Government would find the answer which was correct for South Africa.

PRESIDENT BOTHA said that South Africa still had certain values. There was orderly government, freedom of religion, stable family life, the children were taught decent values, corruption was unacceptable. South Africa had many traditions which had to be maintained if the country and the people were not to retrogress. We lived in a technological era which Africa was not participating in. The backlog was becoming greater every day. South Africa was determined to fight to uphold its values and wanted Africa to share those values. South Africa was tired of being shouted at.

DR CROCKER said that he would convey President Botha's thoughts to his superiors.