

S E C R E T

DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER
AND SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS DURING A
WORKING LUNCH AT THE CASTLE ON 23 AUGUST 1983

The Prime Minister reiterated his invitation to the Secretary General to visit South West Africa and hoped that it would be possible for him to see Ruacana, Oshikati, Omega and Katima Molilo. He was prepared to place his personal aircraft at the Secretary General's disposal and wished to assure him that all arrangements for his security had been made.

The Prime Minister then said that the question of South West Africa had been a bone of contention since 1915 and that the National Party had never supported claims for the incorporation of the territory.

The Prime Minister added that South West Africa was an enormous financial burden for South Africa and that the Republic had to finance the territory last year up to R280 million apart from loans and military expenditure. Who would fill the gap when South Africa left? No other foreign government would be prepared to pay that sort of money. At present it was the South African tax payer who had to bear the burden. It was arrogant for anyone to take up the attitude that South Africa was exploiting South West Africa.

The Prime Minister went on to say that the Government would never accept SWAPO as the sole representative of the peoples of South West Africa. It was simply not true. It might be that SWAPO represented a percentage of the population in Ovamboland but nobody could claim that SWAPO was the sole representative of the South West African people.

The Prime Minister said that resolution 435, apart from certain minor matters which still had to be resolved, was not a major problem. We were prepared to come to an agreement because we wanted peace to prevail but the United Nations would have to also understand our point of view and we would have to be certain that conditions would be created in the territory where one side would not benefit to the detriment of the other.

The Prime Minister said that the turmoil of the civil war in Angola was serious. The Cuban forces stationed there were not only exploiting the territory to the detriment of its peoples but were a direct threat also to South West Africa. As long as the Cubans remain we cannot view the situation without concern.

The Prime Minister said that a new spirit had to be created in Southern Africa as a whole. There was a choice which had to be made whether Southern Africa would live in peace or whether we would fight it out and destroy each other. In the latter event we would have no option. But the other was the road to economic development and cooperation in many important fields where South Africa can play an important role. Meanwhile our neighbouring countries to the north were going back to the bush and their people were starving. He had offered our neighbours non-aggression pacts and economic cooperation and in fact the International Development Bank for Southern Africa was being established from 1 September.

The Prime Minister said that we would allow South West Africa to develop on its own lines but he warned that unless the United Nations took note of the realities of the situation there could be no progress.

The Secretary General thanked the Prime Minister for his frank exposition and added that he hoped that he might be able to make a contribution in solving some of the problems which the Prime Minister had mentioned. He had recently visited all the frontline states and felt that in those states there was a lack of confidence as to South Africa's motives. He understood that we had concerns with the presence of foreign elements. South Africa was a paradise; we had the know-how and the raw materials which can benefit the development of all of Africa but the problem was how could one solve the distrust which existed. He hoped to accelerate the process by making progress in regard to at least the South West African problem and he hoped to present a constructive report to the Security Council on his return. He recognised our security problems and he hoped that we would help him to be able to submit a positive report.

The Prime Minister replied that he thought that the Secretary General could make a contribution, that he should meet with the leaders in South West Africa - separately or jointly - and then he would understand the problems with which the South African Government was faced. He replied that he foresaw no major problems with resolution 435 as long as it was clearly recognised that SWAPO cannot be considered as the only representative of the peoples of South West Africa and that the Cuban presence remain the major problem. He had told President Kaunda that Angola was being torn to pieces by civil war and one cannot leave it to chaotic forces to decide Angola's future. The Secretary General could be instrumental in bringing together the leaders of Southern Africa and he would be prepared to meet them.

The Secretary General said that it was important that one should first create confidence and then he would be

happy to cooperate in bringing about a meeting of the South African leaders. But it was first necessary to solve the problem of South West Africa otherwise a vicious circle would continue.

The Prime Minister replied that the United Nations must recognise that conditions would have to be created for the peoples of South West Africa to be allowed to choose their own form of government by proper means. He repeated that South Africa has no eye on South West Africa.

The Secretary General said that so long as he was Secretary General he was committed to honest elections and that he would see to it that all parties had an equal chance. He would ensure that every officer of UNTAG would be 100% impartial.

The Prime Minister said that he accepted the Secretary General's assurances but the problem was that the peoples of South West Africa did not believe in the United Nations. The United Nations must not sit in an ivory tower and think that it can dictate to the peoples of South West Africa and South Africa cannot do this either.

The Secretary General again thanked the Prime Minister for his friendly reception and for the useful exchange.

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CAPE TOWN
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