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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: First Meeting Between Vice President Mondale and  
Prime Minister Vorster: Rhodesia

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

Vice President Walter F. Mondale  
Mr. David Aaron, Deputy Adviser to the President for National  
Security Affairs  
Mr. W. Anthony Lake, Director, Policy Planning Staff, Department  
of State  
Ambassador Donald McHenry, USUN  
Ambassador to South Africa William Bowdler  
Mr. A. Denis Clift, Adviser to the Vice President for National  
Security Affairs  
Mr. James Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Vice President  
Mr. Jay Kenneth Katzen, USUN (note taker)

South Africa

Prime Minister B. J. Vorster  
Foreign Minister Botha  
General van den Bergh  
South African Ambassador to the United States Donald Sole  
Mr. Brand Fourie, Secretary for Foreign Affairs  
Mr. Franklin, South African Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Acting Permanent Representative to the UN Eksteen

PLACE: Hofburg Conference Room, Vienna, Austria

DATE: Thursday, May 19, 1977

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A photo session took place with the participants at the conference  
table from 0930 to 0950. At 0950, the Vice President and Mr. Aaron  
met with the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Botha for a private

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conversation in the Vice President's office, adjoining the conference room. This meeting was by prior agreement, and lasted 35 minutes. The full meeting began at 1025, and is summarized below:

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: As I understand it, we will discuss the three questions of Southern Rhodesia, Namibia, and South Africa in that order. I suggest we begin with the South African appraisal of the Rhodesian situation, then I will give you our own views.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Did you see Foreign Secretary Owen?

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: I will on Monday. Secretary Vance saw him at the London Summit, and I know the status of the initiative. The United States will support the effort to develop a constitution which will lead to elections and independence in 1978. The original suggestion was for a constitutional conference. Now, we are beginning bilateral consultations which will support Owen's objective. The nature of these consultations has not yet been determined but, hopefully, a consensus will result on the constitution. We have appointed Ambassador Low to participate with the British. I want you to know confidentially that Ambassador Low will shortly be getting a higher position in the State Department. He is among our ablest officers, and is very experienced in African affairs. We hope that our efforts will lead to a consensus and that South Africa will encourage Mr. Smith to work with the process and for free elections with all participating, leading to a new government in Rhodesia in 1978. We have not developed details concerning the constitution. The consultative group will be in Salisbury May 22-23. The United States wants to support the entire effort, but we will not be getting into the details.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Let's go back briefly and look at the history of the negotiations. In 1973 and 1974, Mr. Smith had discussions concerning a possible settlement. After the failure to reach a settlement with Mr. Wilson on "Tiger" and "Fearless" and the failure of Alec Home's visit, Smith talked with the ANC and Muzorewa. These talks failed in August 1974. At that time, the South African Government contacted the President of Zambia, and exchanged emissaries. General van den Bergh went six or seven times to Lusaka. Toward the end of 1974, Zambia asked for assistance to get Nkomo and Sithole out of detention, asking that they be allowed to go to Lusaka for discussions

with the so-called Front Line. We contacted Smith and although he initially was unfavorable, Smith agreed to release them. At our own expense, we flew Nkomo and Sithole several times to Zambia -- well over half a dozen times. Also on behalf of the Zambian President, and following requests by Machel and Nyerere, they were released at our behest. We were as helpful as we could be. The objective was that in Rhodesia, blacks and whites should come together. The meetings in Salisbury and Lusaka were arranged by South Africa. We also sent a South African railway train to the bridge at Livingstone, and brought the parties together. I was there, and Kaunda was, but unfortunately, they didn't find each other. South Africa at all times was prepared to help, and is prepared now. It is not our business to get into the details of the settlement. Smith is willing to find a solution and is understanding. Smith will accept majority rule, which means black rule. He and his people are reconciled to this. But he has a difficulty: with whom is he to negotiate? Geneva was a shambles and it is a shame that it ever happened. The sides were pulled apart there. Mugabe has a two to three percent following; Nkomo ten to twelve percent; Muzorewa seventy percent; Chirau and the others have the rest.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: What is your view on the Owen mission?

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: We will not stand in its way. I am sure that Owen told you that South Africa could not be faulted in the least. We are prepared to listen to any proposals and to give answers. As an indication of my interest in a settlement, and this is confidential, two months ago I met Chivanduka, the No. 2 man in the ANC, in Capetown. We will extend the help we can.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: There are many disparate groups, with different objectives. In order to have the process lead to a government, we need to set into place the negotiating track and a constitution which will allow the elections people want.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I agree entirely.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We don't want to choose the leaders; that is not our role. There should be integrity, fairness and equality in the system. But there is a big gap between where we are and our objective.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: If an election were held tomorrow in Rhodesia, Muzorewa would be chosen overwhelmingly.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Maybe, but we need elections.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I agree.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: The crucial elements are fairness, equality, integrity, and participation by all Rhodesians. That is our objective, and we believe it will lead to a moderate government. There are difficulties on the way to it: white leaders see a threat and believe it is possible, by blocking the process administratively, and for instance, weighing votes, to frustrate the system. There are also blacks who would lose in an election and who would prefer to be anointed. We oppose both of these and, therefore, support the Owen effort to reach a constitution through consultations with all parties. We are aware that all parties won't agree, but the best chance is elections on a fair non-discriminatory basis. South Africa can help by pressing those participating in the process with whom you have influence to accept the process and the results of fair elections. We will encourage others to agree to the process, a constitution, and the results of the elections. Let's be frank.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Fine.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: There is resistance to the Owen idea. Smith still hopes to retain power. That is why I ask South Africa to press Smith to agree to the process, a constitution and elections -- not just to agree to what Smith wants.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: We have passed that point. Smith has accepted. In fact, because of that, he has had a rebellion within his own party. Nine left the party, and he expelled them. They had refused to accept the Owen proposal. Smith has resigned himself to the situation. Smith's difficulty is that while he has accepted black majority rule, it is unclear to whom he is to give it. If one could achieve the ideal, it would be to have a referendum among blacks to elect a leader. It would be the easiest thing in the world for Smith to meet with him and turn over power. On the other hand, if someone on the outside wants Nkomo and Mugabe put in power, no settlement would be possible.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: The Rhodesian leader should be chosen in an open plebiscite. That is our final line. It is not for us to choose one leader. The blacks have rejected an "internal option". The Owen mission seeks to circumvent that process and, instead, to have a constitution with elections of integrity, leading to a process which chooses a leader to run the government. One problem at Geneva was the disagreement over who got anointed. It broke down over rivalries. We want consultations leading to a constitution leading to elections which will choose a leader. We don't exactly accept the point that Smith has agreed to the process. At Geneva he wanted a disproportionate political role for whites, with a blocking possibility which was unacceptable to the black majority in Rhodesia and to international opinion. We want you to persuade Smith and his government to join in the Owen process and not limit your position to accepting what Smith agrees to. We want you too to agree to the result, and to get Smith to. If you only agree to what Smith wants, we won't get the result needed. Others will also require pressure. We are sure that some blacks also don't want elections.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: It's a pity that Rogers and Schauffele aren't here. That Sunday when we met, Dr. Kissinger and Smith agreed to the initial Five Points. In my presence, when Smith intimated he could accept, I said -- and Dr. Kissinger was there -- that if you accept but don't adhere, I will drop you. I can't go any further than that. But I did go further. I said I would guarantee that Smith honors his commitments. I said that to Kissinger with Smith present. I can't do any more. If Smith agrees to the election process, I will support the results.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We appear to agree on that point. We say that a government should be headed by the winner of fair and popular elections. We don't want to say this necessarily will be a black. The figures may say otherwise. In the United States, for instance, we have the experience where a white has been elected from a primarily black electorate and a black from a primarily white electorate. For instance, the mayor of Los Angeles, which is ten percent black, is a black.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: We cannot equate the U.S. situation to Rhodesia or South Africa.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: But this can occur. Let's not say what color will be elected. That is up to the Rhodesian people.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I have no quarrel with that.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: All will participate, none will be excluded. Those outside will return home and participate, and there will be universal suffrage. Do you have any problems with that package?

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Smith and the Rhodesian people feel a need for negotiations between his people and a black leader, to prepare for elections.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Maybe we are talking about different things. The Owen mission wants a constitution which will lead to elections, where a government will be chosen to govern Rhodesia. It is not to choose people to negotiate with Smith.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I am not informed on that score yet.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: If it were otherwise, we would be back to the "internal option", which we cannot accept.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: There is another element. Rhodesia is small, but it is sophisticated. I have spoken to many Rhodesians. They recognize that they can't run Rhodesia with so few whites. They need whites to remain. They don't want a repeat of Angola and Mozambique.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: The more prompt progress is to honest majority government, the greater is the likelihood of avoiding that. We can avoid war and protect personal liberties, property, freedom of religion and independent choice and, thereby, make Rhodesia a more attractive possibility.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Guarantee is needed for the whites from you or Owen. I am not informed of your views on this. A guarantee is needed of law and order, that there will be no expropriation, no confiscation. Otherwise, the whites will leave. Mugabe has said that they will take over property, that there will be trials by people's courts, a Marxist government and expropriation. If this is so, forget about a solution.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: The process envisaged would lead to a constitution, which then would involve popular elections with constitutional protection of rights of property, free speech, religion...

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: an independent judiciary...

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We would hope the system would spell this out and, thereby, people will be encouraged to remain in Rhodesia. Among the elements to discuss in the negotiations are security and the integrity of the election process. That is, the details would be worked out in consultations, including discussions in Salisbury next week. That is our objective. It would help if South Africa would be forthcoming and say you will influence those with whom you have influence, to accept the process and the results and that South Africa will, too. I predict that if leaders are selected this way, you will have moderation. But I can't predict what a lawless government would do. You know the saying, "if there is no law in government, there is no sense going to law school". The longer a delay, the more the radicals will be frustrated and cause changes which will involve them taking power, and will allow the Soviets to enter the scene. The last thing the Soviets want is a democratic secure Rhodesia. That would send them to bed crying. That is why we need your help.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: If these objectives were stated publicly, I have no doubt that the white Rhodesians and the majority of black Rhodesians would accept, and you would have the full backing of the South African Government insofar as necessary. These assurances must be given so that there is no doubt that Rhodesians can accept them. Coupled with that, you would proceed on the Fund we discussed, and then we can have a settlement. All right. You will look to me on Smith and I will look to you on Nkomo and Mugabe. If you can guarantee Nkomo and Mugabe will fall into line, I will guarantee Smith does.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: I don't know yet whether we can get the support of all, but it is our intention to pursue that objective through the Owen mission, to try to get the Front Line support, and to do what we can to accept and support the new government once established. If so, we would support it, and the Fund, and I am confident Congress will be forthcoming.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: If so, I will be alongside you.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: So that what we want are: your support, hopefully public, for Owen; for you to press Smith to negotiate for a settlement providing for majority rule through fair elections in 1978; independence within that date; for you to work with us with such a government so chosen; and for you to help us reduce tensions which will tear at the process. Does that make sense?

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: If you guarantee the points discussed before: freedom of property, no expropriation, an independent judiciary, and so on.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: I have discussed what we seek: a bill of rights, protection, due process. We hope for a multi-racial Zimbabwe, and the possibility for all who wish to stay. I can't guarantee the results. But our goals are free speech, freedom of assembly and religion, equal protection before the law, due process of protection of property -- in the United States, property cannot be confiscated without compensation.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: That is the system in Rhodesia today.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: There also would be an independent judicial tribunal. This isn't a Mondale bill of rights, but these are the general lines we are thinking about.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I understood Owen to say that he would consult with the parties and then the British, with U.S. backing, would draw up a constitution which would be put to the people, then presented to the British Parliament. If the constitution embodies all these points, and the Fund would have to be embodied in it, then, the whites would accept.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Would you press Smith?

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I don't like the word "press". The word is unfortunate. I have never pressed Smith. I talk sense to him.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: That's like what Lyndon Johnson used to say, "reasoning together".

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Never ask me to press him, or say it publicly. I will repudiate it.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We want an internationally acceptable solution. Smith is respected for his obstinacy. You can play a role.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: It is best to leave that to me.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: The public impression is that you still support him. If you don't want to "press" him, there may be a better formulation for what you can do to indicate your commitment.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: The problem in Rhodesia won't be Smith. General van den Bergh knows that. Nkomo and especially Mugabe will be the problem.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: I know the problem is not only Smith.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: It is about twenty percent Smith and eighty percent Nkomo and Mugabe.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We want to move toward the election of a Rhodesian leadership quickly, with the expectation that it will thereby be moderate.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I still think it is best to elect a black to talk to Smith. But Owen and you say no to that. I accept that. The second best solution is to do as Owen says: that is, to draft a constitution with all the elements you have mentioned and US/UK guarantees that the government would be upheld and not be overthrown from outside, and that sanctions will be lifted. Then, the whites in Rhodesia will cooperate, as would South Africa.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: In the meantime, Smith should participate seriously.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: We have advised him and believe he will. We would like the United States to urge the terrorists to hold their horses and help create a good atmosphere.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Let's discuss that last. We want the Owen initiative to succeed. We want a constitution calling for equal and fair participation in Zimbabwe elections. We hope then to have a consortium, a Zimbabwe Fund, to help in the

economic development, growth, infrastructure, and training of the young, moving the country on the path to economic stability. We also are prepared to consider other types of help to strengthen against the threats you describe.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: If so, we will have settlement; if not, we will have none.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We can't guarantee that the people of Zimbabwe will choose a government that will reject public ownership. Even in the UK certain parts of the economy are publicly owned. But we want guarantees, with a judiciary, prohibiting violations through confiscation, prohibiting the violation of rights of assembly and religion. The people's wishes are always so determined in a democracy. But there are public post offices, railways, and airlines in many countries. With this constitution, such decisions would be made with guarantees.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: What is the ordinary Rhodesian concerned about? The farmer is concerned about the confiscation of his property. The pensioner worries about the loss of his pension. The city dweller worries about the loss of property. If you can guarantee that not only the Fund will protect him, but that you will uphold the government and that compensation will be paid in the case of confiscation, I can't foresee any difficulty.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: If we have our way, the constitution will say that no property can be taken without compensation and due process. The Zimbabwe Fund, though, can't be used simply to buy out whites.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: It had never been intended simply for security.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: The Fund is intended to train the young, to improve agricultural techniques and infrastructure. It would provide essential capital for the economy. It would be the government's responsibility, with an independent judiciary, to protect against expropriation.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: In the State Department, our talks reached an advanced stage. There were documents which were UK/US documents, not ours, which confirmed that. The terms in those documents stated that a formal guarantee was given that a scale...

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: a sliding scale

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: ...of compensation would be paid if things went bad and people wanted to leave.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Yes, there has been a change.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: This is the first time I hear of it. Owen told the Prime Minister that the Fund is still alive.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: It is. Let me read from our conception of it. The original plan was a safety net to be used if the government did not provide compensation. Many Rhodesians feel that that was its intention. But it could not be simply be a buy-out fund. The objective of the Fund would be to build the confidence of whites and to ensure fair treatment. We couldn't support and pass a bill in Congress for a buy-out fund.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: We now hear this for the first time. This is a dramatic and radical change. It will make it impossible for us to continue. We don't negotiate with Congress, but we have negotiated with the United States and with Owen. This is very serious and I am very upset. I have misled my Prime Minister and my government. I know of the difficulties with Congress.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: This is not a misunderstanding. This is what we were told.

MR. LAKE: The Fund, by contributing to an independent Zimbabwe, would underwrite an economy of the type of government described by the Vice President, thereby helping to build confidence. Although there would not be compensation from the Fund, this doesn't mean that other methods could not be worked out.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: The whole basis for our approach in getting Smith was the US/UK paper on the Fund. This was the basis for our understanding.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: It was Annex C.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: This presents us with severe problems immediately.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Under Kissinger, it was described as you say.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: This was a British Paper.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: In the United States, there has been much public discussion and congressional debate. The conclusion was reached that it would not be a buy-out fund, but it would be used to develop the economy, equal economic growth and opportunity. The protection should be in constitutional guarantees, protected by an independent tribunal.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Originally, the Zimbabwe Development Fund had a dual purpose. It was to help develop infrastructure, and it was to do everything it could to help the whites remain. But, in case they wanted or had to leave, there would be a sliding scale of compensation payable by year. The people are encouraged to stay. But this is a radical departure now from what we and Smith were told.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: I regret the breakdown in communications. But, in the United States, there was public discussion of the question.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: Owen told us several weeks ago that...

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Foreign Minister Botha discussed the question in the State Department.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: Senator Clark agreed with the Fund as we had thought it was set up. The previous Administration had discussed it with Congress. We had discussed it with Smith.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Mr. Fourie told me that the British Ambassador had confirmed several weeks ago that the Fund was still all right.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: There has been much public discussion of the question in the United States. Testimony has been heard. I regret that communications have broken down.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: This is the first time we heard about it. That the Fund was all right was confirmed by the British only 14 days ago.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: But did the British describe it?

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: Owen said that the Fund was very much alive then. The British representative later confirmed it.

MR. FOURIE: Please reread your statement.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: There would be provisions for the "fair treatment of whites, whose confidence is essential".

MR. AARON: The objective remains to have the whites stay. The program we can support would maintain the economy against radicalization. It would offer the means for the government to provide compensation and encourage a moderate economy. A buy-out fund would encourage the whites to leave.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: What if the Zimbabwe Government says it won't compensate despite the constitution, which doesn't mean anything anyway. We have the documents. Now, this is a change.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA (to Prime Minister Vorster): I was there in Washington talking about this.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER (to Foreign Minister Botha): To whom were you talking?

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA (to Prime Minister Vorster): Rogers, and a black gentleman. There were three or four British gentlemen, including Duff. We discussed it in details. There never was any doubt. This places the whole thing in jeopardy. We can't go back.

MR. LAKE: The Zimbabwe Development Fund is intended to support a healthy economy. The Fund, as constituted before, would not do that.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: "Fair treatment" doesn't mean a buy-out. Rather, the whites would share in the development process.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: You should have communicated this to us. Did you tell the British?

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: They knew. I thought you did.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: I have an 11 September 1976 State Department document here which lists the elements of the Fund. They include providing capital to develop the industrial and agricultural economy, national development, technological and financial assistance, and training for blacks. Paragraph five lists the essentials which would be in the constitution. Zimbabwe would respect property, and there would be no confiscation. Pensions would be continued, and there would be a safety net to compensate on housing. This was the Zimbabwe Adjustment Fund. This was the latest information we got and was the basis for our work.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: It is close to noon now. I propose we do two things: we will inquire in Washington. I have described the views of the new Government. Let's see what we can do. Secondly, I acknowledge that the Fund is a matter requiring further discussions with the parties concerned, to have all participating. The Congress opposes a buy-out. This is a difference which may not be reconcilable. I am surprised that with all the discussion that has been going on in the United States, it had not been communicated to you.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: I remember Senator Clark said publicly that if we spent half a billion dollars a week in Vietnam, it would be worth one and a half billion dollars to save lives in Rhodesia. Since the senior congressional committees had agreed, we had been assured that the Fund was going ahead.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: I know the views of the Congress on the buy-out aspect.

FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA: This is not a buy-out fund.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Let's talk about this later.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: The Fund would back up the constitution.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: It still will, but our Government won't pay for acquiring property. Rather, we will for training and so on. Let's have lunch and explore the matter later in the consultative group. Let's have a word on the violence going on. As I understand it, the British relayed the Smith-Kaunda message. The other day, Smith struck into Botswana. They already have been in Mozambique. There has been violence on both sides.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: Yes.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We should wind down the level of violence, in an effort to promote peace.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: OK.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: I would hope that South Africa could help persuade Smith.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: We have done so on numerous occasions. But Smith says he doesn't have the bases in Mozambique and Zambia. They don't strike soldiers or police, but civilians, women and children, who are abducted and killed. The Rhodesian Government is responsible for its blacks, too, and must protect them. Most of its citizens are black. The Front Line should play it down, too, but instead, has played it up. Therefore, we are saddled with the problem. We both regret it. What is there to do? The approach should be not only to Smith but to the Front Line presidents.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: As a practical matter, we can't move unless progress is made on negotiations. We would hope to reduce the incursions and through this, diminish the military operations and eliminate them as we near elections. We do need the Front Line support. Otherwise, there will be an escalation.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I agree, and this help must come from both sides.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Are you a lawyer?

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I have had 20 years of practice.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Well you know what I mean, then, when I say this is like the lawyer in the middle of a couple about to be divorced. Let's try to reduce the violence. You use your good offices and we will encourage those with whom we have some say.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: The Front Line presidents should encourage a reduction of violence.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We have stated our opposition to the killing, and will continue to do so.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: The violence should cease during the negotiations. If the violence continues, Smith will continue to strike back.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: It probably is unrealistic to expect that. But let's try to restrain them and reduce it.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: You don't need to convert me. Someone should speak to Mugabe and Nkomo.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We are not encouraging them. We have spoken to them and we will continue to.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: I don't blame you, but you have influence.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We have some. If we ask for an end to violence now, it won't succeed, but we will use our good offices, and hope you will use yours.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: You can call on me. There was a period when we also encouraged a de-escalation, but it must be more than a one-sided effort.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: Let's meet again after lunch.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: In view of the way things are going, and this new element, we are talking about the Owen effort and the constitution in a vacuum. We need a constitution as soon as possible, to have the guarantees incorporated in it. We have to see it and then, using the constitution as a basis, see where we go. This is the best way, as a practical politician and a lawyer, that I can see to proceed.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We can't see all the details now, but we can move now to support the process. One of our ablest men is in the consultative group. We agree on general outlines and principles for an election by all Zimbabwe citizens, and that the government will be a new one. Also, that we will encourage the parties concerned.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: We need a constitution first. We all will reserve our rights until we see the constitution.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We need general agreement. That is all we can expect now. I suggest that we refrain from press comments at this time.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: We don't talk to the press unnecessarily.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We try not to talk to the press at all.

PRIME MINISTER VORSTER: We will not talk to them, but leaks scare me.

VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE: We say that in Washington, Top Secret is James Reston and Secret is The Washington Post.

The meeting broke up into private discussions at 1220, and adjourned at 1230.

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Second Meeting Between Vice President Mondale and  
Prime Minister Vorster: Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa

PARTICIPANTS:

United States

Vice President Walter F. Mondale

Mr. David Aaron, Deputy Adviser to the President for National Security  
Affairs

Mr. W. Anthony Lake, Director, Policy Planning Staff, Department of  
State

Ambassador Donald McHenry, USUN

Ambassador to South Africa William Bowdler

Mr. A. Denis Clift, Adviser to the Vice President for National Security  
Affairs

Mr. James Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Vice President

Mr. Jay Kenneth Katzen, USUN (Note taker)

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South African Ambassador to the United States Donald Sole

Mr. Brand Fourie, Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Mr. Franklin, South African Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Acting Permanent Representative to the UN Eksteen

PLACE: Hofburg Conference Room, Vienna, Austria

DATE: Thursday, May 19, 1977

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The meeting began at 1445.

Vice President Mondale: I have looked into the Rhodesia question. The only reference I have found is a memorandum of conversation between Owen and the South African Government several weeks ago, in which Owen said it would be difficult to get sponsors if the Fund were interpreted as a buy out. Owen knows the Congressional views, and the Congress didn't support the Fund for only buy out purposes.

Prime Minister Vorster: Owen never mentioned this to me.

Mr. Fourie: The question asked was, "Is the Fund dead?", and the answer

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was, "No, it is very much alive".

Vice President Mondale: We support the Fund, but not the buy out aspect envisaged by Dr. Kissinger. We support stability in a future Zimbabwe through constitutional guarantees, a swift move to elections, which will create a moderate government and, as we develop details of the Fund, we would be willing to shape assurances of protection and help to property owners. This would be part of the consulting process.

Prime Minister Vorster: We reserve our position. We will have to go back and look at the minutes.

Vice President Mondale: The position of the Congress and our own position are clear. The original plan was for a buy out Fund. It now would be a way to have provisions which will reassure all. Perhaps the money from the Fund could be used for expenses within Rhodesia, which would release other funds which could be used for that purpose. We hope that a post-independence Rhodesia would be secure for all.

Mr. Fourie: You have mentioned a desire to include protection for those with property. Would that include pensions?

Vice President Mondale: I can't get into details. But we believe, yes. And property at a real market value.

Prime Minister Vorster: We reserve our stand. We will have to clear up the matter with the British.

Vice President Mondale: In an effort to produce a constructive hopeful environment, could you agree to the following language?: "The South African Government agrees to support British/American efforts to get the directly interested parties to agree to an independence constitution and the necessary transitional arrangements, including the holding of elections in which all can take part equally, so that Zimbabwe ...

Prime Minister Vorster: Rhodesia ...

Vice President Mondale: "... can achieve independence during 1978".

Prime Minister Vorster: I will consider it and reply before you leave. I already have told the Five my position concerning South West Africa. South Africa is not occupying the territory, but is administering it, and has done so since entrusted to by the Mandate. We do not want one inch for ourselves. It is not part of South Africa, and we would not incorporate it if you wanted us to. South West Africa belongs to various peoples; they are independent people, have different languages, different cultures, different levels of development, and different numbers. We always wanted it to come to independence as an entity although, for a

period, we explored establishing separate development -- which is what they wanted. From 1967, we agreed that the peoples would determine their own future. Six years ago, Secretary General Waldheim came to South Africa. As a result, he agreed to send a personal representative to South Africa and South West Africa. He was Dr. Escher, a Swiss diplomat in Vienna. Escher and I came to an understanding, in writing. We both signed it. I received a copy of Escher's report, and that was the last I heard. The fact is that Escher was ignored: such is the nature of UNO. Both Waldheim and Escher reproached us, saying that we were keeping the people of South West Africa from each other. As a result, to the satisfaction of Waldheim and Escher, I brought the leaders together, to know each other, and to work together. I have kept to this obligation. Meetings have been held and agreement was reached to work together. The Ovambo people, which constitute 47% of the population, have an elected, adult suffrage, one-man one-vote government. They have had several elections. In the last one, two years ago, all Ovambos who had left were invited back, with the agreement that nothing would be held against them. Many came. The only requirement was to come in peace. SWAPO had a chance to participate in the elections, which were held as elections are held in South Africa and the United States. The Okavango, who constitute 50,000 of South West Africa's 800,000 people, also have an elected government, with a cabinet, and ministers. South Africa never, from the Mandate, governed either Ovambo or Okavango. The Basters have 16,000 out of 800,000 people. They are proud of being Basters. They will come up on the street and introduce themselves as Basters. They have their own constitution. They also have governed themselves and have laws which apply only if the Basters want them applied. The Damaras, and there are 65,000 of them, haven't a government yet. Nor do the Hereros, who are 43,000. They all want a government and have asked for it, and we owe them governments. From the Escher/Waldheim meetings, the South West African authorities decided to hold a conference which led to the meeting at Turnhalle. This was serious work. By a miracle a consensus approved a constitution. South Africa is committed to giving them a constitution. We warned the parties of this commitment and have told them that by mid-May, they would be asking for it. After all, they drew it up. I have no desire to interfere. Had it not been for the Five, I would have given them that constitution. But the Five objected seriously. I stuck my neck out far by agreeing not to have the South African Parliament approve the constitution. Rather, the State President will. But, I suggested that the contact group see the people in Windhoek. Turnhalle is not my friend: it is my enemy. That is the situation. Now our attitude is -- and no one will get us away from this -- that it is their situation to decide.

Vice President Mondale: As I understand it, agreement was reached with the Five that there would be elections, with all participating.

Prime Minister Vorster: There was no agreement. The Five said they had to go back to their governments. We said we had to go to speak to the people at Turnhalle. I don't know what happened. I didn't see the people

at Turnhalle. But you should know that 95% of the white electorate approved the Turnhalle constitution the other day.

Vice President Mondale: Secondly, I understand that agreement was reached for the UN to have a representative present to satisfy the fairness of the elections and the electoral process.

Prime Minister Vorster: To give it international credibility. Yes.

Vice President Mondale: Thirdly, that South Africa agreed to withdraw instrumentalities of government in phases.

Prime Minister Vorster: "After the installation of a government".

Ambassador McHenry: We discussed the development of a program for the withdrawal of instrumentalities after the electoral process.

Vice President Mondale: That was the situation then on withdrawal. There were no agreements on detainees and political prisoners, or restrictive laws. But we found these discussions very hopeful.

Prime Minister Vorster: I also agreed on 31 December 1978 as the date for independence.

Vice President Mondale: There was progress and we were glad of it. There also were problems and we'd like to discuss them.

Prime Minister Vorster: Fine. What happened in the later talks you had after the Capetown meeting?

Ambassador McHenry: As agreed, we sent representatives to Windhoek, to speak to Internal SWAPO, the National Front, church leaders and others. We also have spoken since to External SWAPO, the Front Line Presidents and members of the Security Council. There was a full gamut of reactions, running from the belief that real progress had been achieved to the feeling that no progress had been reached. There also was suspicion over the trustworthiness of South Africa. In general, the questions asked were the same as those asked in Capetown: What is the "central administering authority"? There was concern over the extent of UN involvement, which would be necessary to overcome suspicion. The question of political prisoners had to be resolved. There must be a phased withdrawal. South Africa could be in a position to intimidate, thereby upsetting the environment for free elections. These were the basic questions; there also were other ones. The reaction of the Turnhalle group was different. They suspected any UN role. They were disappointed over the delay in ratification, but were open.

Prime Minister Vorster: Only this morning I received a telegram from them asking the status of the constitution.

Vice President Mondale: The United States supports Security Council Resolution 385. That requires an impartial interim administering authority, which would not prejudice the future government by tilting. In order to be consistent with Resolution 385, it must be a neutral authority. Secondly, we need fair and equal participation in a national election. Its purpose should be to create a constituent assembly, leading to a constitution and a governing process. What does South Africa have in mind?

Prime Minister Vorster: We already explained this to you. Most of the people already have their own governments; there are some without. The Hereros and Damaras want local government. My government and I are committed to give it to them. Normally, there would have been a law approved by the South African Parliament before the end of June but, to accommodate the Five, rather than Parliament, I agreed that the State President could promulgate it. I understood that the Five looked favorably upon this. I am also heavily committed to give them a constitution, if they want it. But again, as I have said, I agreed that rather than Parliament, the State President will promulgate it. This is an absolute minimum. The South African Government will give the Damaras and Hereros local government and give an interim government to South West Africa. The people are elected under a system the same as that which we seek to apply in Rhodesia.

Vice President Mondale: What is the central authority?

Prime Minister Vorster: Whereas the Ovambos would have been entitled to 47% participation in the central authority/interim government, they won't ask for it. The government will have representatives of each population group. At the most, there will be two whites and eleven non-whites. That is the way they are used to working.

Vice President Mondale: This is a very serious matter from our own standpoint. It was our hope that South Africa would accept national elections with all Namibians participating, leading to a constituent assembly, which would create a constitution. The structure would have free and equal elections, without an intimidating environment. As in Rhodesia, many leaders want to be anointed.

Prime Minister Vorster: The leaders in South West Africa have been elected.

Foreign Minister Botha: In Rhodesia and South West Africa, like it nor not, there is a central authority.

Vice President Mondale: We want a neutral administrative authority doing all the necessary functions, while elections are conducted leading to the preparation of a constitution.

Foreign Minister Botha: Elections are not ruled out.

Vice President Mondale: That's our objective. The Turnhalle structure was rejected both by the UN and the United States. You don't need my sermons, though. But I can tell you that the equivalent of the Turnhalle conference, as the central authority, would be rejected.

Prime Minister Vorster: An election was envisaged. Turnhalle would prefer a referendum of all South West Africans, with equal voting and adult suffrage, concerning the issue of a constitution, i.e., to ratify the Turnhalle constitution. I believe that this is the fair way. If you think it is not representative, test it. No harm is done by doing that.

Ambassador McHenry: At Capetown, the Foreign Minister suggested that the Turnhalle constitution would not be submitted to Parliament. Rather, administrative rearrangements would be made to create a central administering authority. The term "interim government" was not used.

Foreign Minister Botha: I dropped it.

Ambassador McHenry: The Group had reservations over your position. To the extent that this authority resembles Turnhalle, it would complicate efforts to reach a solution. But the Group at Capetown was in the impossible position of trying to shape things but being told when we raised questions that the South African Government had not had enough time to develop answers. South Africa had insisted in the agreed points that the central authority would not be Turnhalle by another name. Although Turnhalle representatives were elected, there is a question over the participation in the election, and whether the electorate really had a choice. The reason we are asking for details is to avoid a stacked deck. The central authority could determine the future form of a government in Namibia. The question of local authorities was raised, and the contact group said that possibly this would be no problem.

Prime Minister Vorster: We envisage one representative participating in the central authority from each tribal group, and not all tribal groups would be included. The UK representative had asked me whether this would not be a reconstitution of Turnhalle. I said, "more or less". You asked about including businessmen. That was thoroughly discussed.

Vice President Mondale: Our hopes are somewhat smashed. We had thought that questions on the UN and so on related to what form was to be determined for the central authority. Now we learn that the result of these talks will still mean Turnhalle authority, with representation determined by tribe. It is thus possible that a "yes" or "no" proposition will be put to the Namibians regarding their future by a group elected by many, but without full participation or national approval. This solution will not receive international acceptance.

It will be internationally rejected. The United States will oppose it. It will result in the aggravation of what I hoped to have, namely, better relations with South Africa. This is not a threat. But in sorrow, I ask you to reconsider this question. Such a conference which may be held could accept parts of the Turnhalle constitution, which could be accepted internationally through a fully participating election, leading to a constituent assembly, and independence. This would reflect your commitment to fulfill the wishes of the South West African people.

Prime Minister Vorster: As much as the United States, South Africa wishes to get out of South West Africa. The costs of remaining are higher than we currently can afford. If we leave, we will take what we own. This would lead to a standstill. But if we are forced, we will do so. We will take the railroad wagons and rolling stock out. We want our troops and police to leave. They both cost a lot of money. We are only there because governments have asked us to be. If we left, we would have an Angola twice over due to SWAPO and, as in Rhodesia, abductions of our people. We have a common purpose. But I would rather leave public life than be responsible for such a development. I am absolutely committed, having promised the people of South West Africa an interim government. If I did not do so, this would totally destroy the credibility of South Africa with South West Africa.

Vice President Mondale: We don't care about the name of the authority. We do care about the process, and participation in developing the structure. If such is done, we and the international community would support an independent Namibia, and also thereby have improved relations with South Africa. We don't like communism. What we did in the United States was to deny them their causes. Communists use pockets of violence to exploit a situation and to accelerate hostility and more violence. In Namibia and Rhodesia we have a chance to turn the corner. Turnhalle would contribute only to producing an undesirable environment.

Prime Minister Vorster: That's where we differ.

Vice President Mondale: Aspects of Turnhalle can be included in the settlement. We want all people to participate in the elections.

Prime Minister Vorster: That's alright. The machinery of the electoral process could be supervised by the UN.

Vice President Mondale: But we had hoped elections would be to determine the process.

Foreign Minister Botha: That is not ruled out.

Vice President Mondale: I thought you said that elections would be

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constituted to ratify Turnhalle.

Prime Minister Vorster: South West Africa would prefer the Turnhalle system, and I think it's best. There would be elections under universal suffrage for a constituent assembly, leading to an independent government.

Vice President Mondale: What is the entity of the interim government?

Prime Minister Vorster: We haven't clarified it with the Turnhalle. The Foreign Minister has been busy with his own election recently.

Foreign Minister Botha: There have been 31 years of dispute over South West Africa. That's a long time. We had 5-6 International Court decisions, over 200 General Assembly resolutions and Security Council resolutions. Our real concerns are South West African independence as an entity within a reasonable period, with majority rule and no prejudgment as to its future government. Too much is being made of what the central authority is. You fear that an interim government would give an edge to one side. Turnhalle has been in operation for three years. South Africa could have influenced the details, but they have not yet been worked out. There is nothing sinister here.

Vice President Mondale: The structure must be suitable. The question is who will be the interim government.

Prime Minister Vorster: South West Africa will not control all the ministries.

Vice President Mondale: The interim period will be crucial. If it is only Turnhalle, it will not be accepted. If it is broadly created, it could be. The nature of its functions must be clearly neutral and all Namibia should participate in the process, with UN involvement. Then, we are coming close. The key point is what is the interim government?

Prime Minister Vorster: Would it suit you better if we withdrew tomorrow lock, stock and barrel from South West Africa:

Vice President Mondale: We want a stable situation. We wish full participation in elections, and a constituent assembly. We want your cooperation.

Prime Minister Vorster: There are only two alternatives for South Africa: Either we pull out and stop salaries and payments, telling South West Africa that we're sorry, but that we have been forced out or, to do what people have asked. Turnhalle is representative, no matter what you think. You should accede to their minimum demands and that government, calling it by whatever name you wish. I will accord local government to the Damaras and Hereros and an interim government will be set up to run daily life. Then elections will be held, with caveats

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mentioned by the Five, on a territory-wide basis. Independence will come for one territorial entity. These are the only two alternatives. I can't think of another.

Vice President Mondale: The process needs international acceptability. It is in your best interests, we believe, and in the interest of better relations with the United States, to support a neutral authority, which will lead to elections, a constitution and independence.

Foreign Minister Botha: Your concern is exaggerated. What we envisage is an alternative to the status quo. Currently, there is a white legislature in the South, a colored council advisory body, a Rehoboth authority, and black governments in the north. Certain members of South African ministries now are in South West Africa. They could have manipulated and still can far more than the central authority will be able to. The central authority as we envisaged it will be open, and black dominated, and will achieve the goals we seek.

Vice President Mondale: What would be the powers of the interim government?

Foreign Minister Botha: We have discussed this with the people at Turnhalle. Turnhalle is ready to move ahead on a change in some of the modalities.

Vice President Mondale: We are grateful for the schedule having been changed.

Foreign Minister Botha: The Prime Minister's own caucus would ask him to leave office if he does not honor his commitment.

Prime Minister Vorster: Over the years, the UN demanded independence for South West Africa as a whole, "come hell or high water". If this then is not acceptable, it is not our problem. At least we can wash our hands of it.

Foreign Minister Botha: Independence would be preceded by a fair test.

Vice President Mondale: What if you withdrew now? What would the world say were South Africa to withdraw when Namibia was internally fragmented?

Prime Minister Vorster: That always was the case.

Vice President Mondale: Can we define the interim government which will move the process forward to elections as being fair and independent?

Ambassador McHenry: Whether South Africa considers this a small matter or not, the interim government is seen as an important shaper of the future.

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Foreign Minister Botha: The status quo also could shape the future. There is much focus on the interim government and the interim period. We don't want a system like that in Rhodesia. We are almost in agreement. Since there is only one point of contention, it would be a pity to have this cause us to differ.

Prime Minister Vorster: The interim government isn't new; it is two years old. No one objected to it before. You must accept the point that we are committed. I cannot stay in public life if I do not honor that commitment.

Vice President Mondale: Opposition to the Turnhalle was set forth when the contact group met.

Prime Minister Vorster (to Fourie): Has any government gone on record as objecting to Turnhalle?

Mr. Fourie (to Prime Minister Vorster): We have received no note on this.

Vice President Mondale: On April 22, 1975, we sent an Aide Memoire to you, along with the UK and France. On October 23, 1975, we, the UK, and France made a demarche concerning this. Dr. Kissinger also sought an alternative to Turnhalle.

Foreign Minister Botha: That is incorrect. Dr. Kissinger wanted the conference moved to Geneva, with SWAPO joining it.

Ambassador McHenry: Our underlying efforts have been for equal participation. Turnhalle has not been a fully participatory organization.

Mr. Fourie: The presentation by the Five was the first time we heard this.

Prime Minister Vorster: The Ford Government had said that SWAPO did not have a full chance to participate. We said we would tell Turnhalle of that view. Dr. Kissinger said that money for a Geneva conference to include Turnhalle and SWAPO would be raised. He drew up the Seven Points, to which we agreed. The program then was put to SWAPO, and SWAPO shot it down.

Mr. Fourie: Dr. Kissinger asked the Prime Minister not to allow Turnhalle to go too fast. The first deadline was extended to November, then later. We said not later than January-February.

Vice President Mondale: Let's take a short break.

The meeting adjourned, 1630-1700.

Vice President Mondale: Concerning the interim authority, I suggest, as we just discussed privately, that we have the contact group come to Capetown in two weeks to discuss with your government plans for phased withdrawal and other details.

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Prime Minister Vorster: We had a gentleman's agreement that phased withdrawal would be the last item discussed.

Ambassador McHenry: The phrase we agreed to was "South Africa would prepare a plan for phased withdrawal".

Prime Minister Vorster: That is correct. It was a "plan for withdrawal at the end of the political process."

Ambassador McHenry: It is somewhat imprecise.

Prime Minister Vorster: I am reading from your document.

Vice President Mondale: That's the first time we have ever been imprecise.

Ambassador McHenry: We wouldn't await the end of the process before the withdrawal. We should discuss this.

Prime Minister Vorster: Alright, but this is our stand.

Vice President Mondale: Then the contact group will meet again in Capetown in two weeks, there will be free and fair national elections, leading to a constituent assembly, leading to a constitution and phased withdrawal. This would be internationally acceptable.

Prime Minister Vorster: I suggest we meet 1 June. I can't make it 31 May.

Vice President Mondale: Let's say late May, at a date to be immediately determined. It will discuss the nature of the central administrative authority. Would you discuss withdrawal at that time?

Prime Minister Vorster: Yes. I'll discuss all questions.

Vice President Mondale: OK.

Foreign Minister Botha: The Turnhalle representatives should be present. They would be helpful.

Ambassador McHenry: I can't speak for the Five, but I think our position is that it would be inappropriate. The UN wouldn't be there, nor would any group like SWAPO, or the National Front. We have tried to brief all groups. We don't want to anoint one group. We are prepared to explore the ideas there with you first, then with other parties.

Prime Minister Vorster: I can understand your point of view, but they will be there because we have to refer to them.

Vice President Mondale: That poses real difficulties for us.

Prime Minister Vorster: As we said at coffee, I have my own commitments

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to honor by 20 June, if we don't find each other. I am not saying we will.

Vice President Mondale: Having Turnhalle present would be different from the first meeting, and would imply tilting. I understand your position; you understand ours. Both governments should think carefully about this over the next few weeks. I don't know if we can reach an agreement, but we should make the effort. Maybe now, since elections prevented you from doing so earlier, we can come up with something, reserving the right to pursue our own policies.

Prime Minister Vorster: I'm prepared to meet you there.

Vice President Mondale: Let's talk about the question of returnees.

Ambassador McHenry. This involves language referring to "all persons".

Prime Minister Vorster: I accepted that in Capetown. It has been and is our policy. But it does not apply to those floating around. According to our intelligence, a substantial number are being detained in Zambia and elsewhere.

Vice President Mondale: All should be allowed to return.

Prime Minister Vorster: You realize that those have been detained for not agreeing with Nujoma.

Vice President Mondale: Yes.

Prime Minister Vorster: The distinction between detainees and political prisoners was made in Capetown.

Vice President Mondale: They should be released.

Prime Minister Vorster: There is a difference between detainees and common prisoners.

Vice President Mondale: In the United States, we have had success over a period of 200 years and know that the best way to destroy an opponent is not to lock him up, but let him speak. Don't martyr your militants.

Prime Minister Vorster: They have been guilty of arson, murder and theft; there is a distinction.

Vice President Mondale: There are charges though, that they are incarcerated. You can't have an electoral campaign and process without the prisoners being freed and returned. The United States is having its own fight with the Soviet Union over political prisoners. Solzhenytsin, Sakharov, Bukovsky, Amalrik, and others were in jail only because the Soviets didn't

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want to listen to them. We have honored them, including sending a letter to Sakharov, which made Brezhnev mad, and receiving Bukovsky in the White House. At Belgrade we are making our point over political prisoners. There is difference between a militant and a political dissident. The contact group suggested setting up an international commission of jurists. If the prisoners could be returned to Namibia and cases reviewed by the commission of jurists, that might be an acceptable solution.

Prime Minister Vorster: We can discuss that too. It was discussed with Kissinger; he gave us a list. We reviewed it and have made a note. According to the note, a substantial number of those on the list already were released, but their names were still on. A substantial number were never detained whatsoever. Those convicted of crimes we cannot release, but we could if SWAPO states that it seeks peaceful change, will cease its terrorism, and that release of prisoners will not jeopardize either of these objectives. The final decision is up to the South African government. It is sensible that the commission might look into it.

Ambassador McHenry: At Capetown there was some agreement on detainees.

Prime Minister Vorster: Let's have further discussion.

Ambassador McHenry: Now.

Vice President Mondale: Yes, now. It is an important question. Where the courts have decided a case is criminal, the commission would have jurisdiction to decide on its own.

Mr. Fourie: The commission would settle electoral disputes and decide who is a political prisoner.

Vice President Mondale: The first part of that was accepted.

Prime Minister Vorster: Let's discuss this in Capetown. I have to see my colleagues and will try to review the matter as favorably as possible.

Vice President Mondale: Both of us have served in public life; we know of the need for political gestures. We know that there are Namibian prisoners held elsewhere. We object to that and will say so. We suggest that it would be a helpful political gesture for Namibian prisoners whom you hold in South Africa to be returned to Namibia with the assistance of an international commission.

Foreign Minister Botha: We have reliable intelligence that as soon as this becomes known, that is that we will release prisoners without a trial, that there will be hasty military trials held for South West African prisoners detained in other countries, and that they will be executed summarily. We need urgent action to avoid this. Nujoma will not want to have released prisoners who oppose him.

Vice President Mondale: That is an excellent point, and we will act on it.

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Prime Minister Vorster: Some may argue that all prisoners should be released on the same day.

Vice President Mondale: Just because other countries don't release their prisoners at the same time doesn't justify you not releasing yours. It would be a point of honor for South Africa to do so, and provide an example. It would put you in a good position, and help us enormously.

Foreign Minister Botha: Isn't that a double standard?

Prime Minister Vorster: We would lose face with the blacks in Ovambo whose relatives are held in Zambia.

Vice President Mondale: Tell them that to do otherwise would build up pressure.

Prime Minister Vorster: I would lose face.

Foreign Minister Botha: If we don't move quickly, they will shoot them.

Prime Minister Vorster: It would be better were you to say in your approach to the Zambians that we have a guarantee that if you release your political prisoners, South Africa will.

Vice President Mondale: If I may go off the record, I believe that if some of your prisoners were released, they could represent a moderating force on SWAPO.

Prime Minister Vorster: Our intelligence is just the opposite.

Vice President Mondale: Why does Njoma want them in jail then?

Foreign Minister Botha: Your criticism just isn't fair. Many former SWAPO members are returning to South West Africa voluntarily, and are participating in political life. Karena and Kazunguizi are examples.

Vice President Mondale: We would like South Africa to provide an example on this and consider it seriously.

Prime Minister Vorster: Alright, but others should too.

Vice President Mondale: OK, but I hope this is not a condition.

Prime Minister Vorster: Look into the Zambian and Tanzanian prisoners.

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Foreign Minister Botha: Have you seen the Amnesty International Report on SWAPO detainees in Zambia?

Vice President Mondale: We want their release, too. I'd like to discuss South Africa tomorrow and hope that you will study our language on Rhodesia in the meantime. I'm not going to advise, but I want to tell you about us and what is going on in America in order for you to understand us better. Mr. Botha knows much of this already. We have undergone a profound transformation over the past ten years. Those who deal with us must understand this. For 200 years, our record on race was disgraceful. It separated people in politics, schools, buses, business, and systems of justice. Growing up a non-white was a curse. We had slavery. For 100 years, we made a long and tortuous march to justice. We are not perfect, but we are proud of where we are. We are proud of our attitudes toward each other. We have gained increased strength as a nation over the past ten years. When I replaced Hubert Humphrey in the Senate, many senators from the South would argue against blacks, saying they were violent, communists and rip-offs; they saw Martin Luther King as a dishonest hustler. It was a dangerous situation which led to violence. In 1968-69, our cities looked like we were at war. Washington looked like Vietnam -- it was sickening. We have eliminated all laws which separate and discriminate. We have insisted on enforcing the constitution in schools and elsewhere. Now we're doing things together -- politics, religion, education. A symbol of that is that we have the first southern President in 130 years. In a town that is 80% black, he led the fight for equality. Martin Luther King's assistant represents us at the United Nations. The result is more peace and good will and strength in the United States. It is indescribable. We have an economic boom in precisely those places where most discrimination had existed. Atlanta is the heart of that boom. We have no more rhetoric. Blacks want to become middle class and rich, as we all do. Perhaps no one is more middle class than the blacks. In the South, blacks are often elected by whites, as in Andy Young's case. Tom Bradley was elected in Los Angeles, which is only 10% non-white. We are not only at peace with ourselves, but can challenge others; before, we couldn't. Now, Brezhnev is angry with us because he can't attack us. President Carter wanted me to describe this to you. It was reflected in the prompt repeal of the Byrd Amendment. The change is fundamental and enduring. It is based on religion. Human rights are at the core of our meaning, and those who deal with us must understand this.

Prime Minister Vorster: There really isn't any time for me to reply. Could we meet tomorrow a bit earlier?

Vice President Mondale: Yes. Let's meet at 8:00 o'clock, and continue on now. Let's also agree not to make any statement to the press tonight.

Prime Minister Vorster: Fine. You have said that blacks are not inferior. I too have said that they are not. I have asked, "who am I as a creature of God to say another is inferior?" The basis of our philosophy is not that I am better. But there are certain South African realities you must understand, and certain backgrounds. Let's look at education. The better an education, the better one's chance for fulfillment. Before my government came to power, the state had no responsibility for black education -- only for the whites and some for Coloreds. It subsidized state and religious organizations. Then, my predecessor, Dr. Verwoerd, took over Bantu education. 7.5 million pounds were set aside for black education. The South Africans who are feted in the United States opposed that then. In 1955, the state accepted full responsibility for black education. In 1955, 731,000 blacks were in primary school; in 1973, 2,166,000 blacks were in primary school; now, 22% of the whole black population is at school -- the highest in all of Africa. 3,200,000 blacks are now in schools of all levels. In high school, in 1955, there were 34,000 blacks; in 1973 -- 181,000; now, over 200,000. At universities until 1936, admission was refused to blacks. Thereafter, universities opened but, if a "Vorster" applied he got in; if a "McHenry" applied there was no room left. Black universities were built, with equal facilities and 100% subsidized. Thanks to the current government, thousands of blacks now are at universities. There also are Indian and Colored universities. Of the 32,000 member police force, half are white, half non-white. Until our time, a non-white could not advance beyond the level of sergeant. I know what the world says about me. But when I was Minister of Justice in the 60's, I asked, why not have non-white officers? I put it through. Previously, black people couldn't be professors or lecturers. They wouldn't be there now if it hadn't been for me. I want you to accept that from me. There is a black Rector at the University of the North. Whites serve under him. If that is not progress, what is? In sports -- when my critics were in, no non-white could compete at home or overseas. Your Ambassador knows the situation now. This government made it possible. Now they do participate. Rugby is a national sport, nearly a religion. Different colored teams now play each other. Mixed teams also play international teams. Even five years ago, this was unheard of. If not for my policy this couldn't have been possible. You mustn't equate the American black with the South African black, and I can argue this until the cows come home. Whether you like it or not, due to our history and British efforts to Anglicize us, Afrikaans was not tolerated as a language. The British used to put us in the corner with a dunce cap and insist we write a hundred times on the board "I must not speak Dutch". Now, Afrikaner children go to Afrikaans schools; English go to English schools, Xhosa to Xhosa schools, Venda to Venda schools, Zulu to Zulu schools and Coloreds to Colored schools. No one can change this. No one will dare to. If you say change, I'll say I can't. It is ingrained and I won't. Whilst this is our position, we have created opportunity. We always will have separate townships. No one can change that. In the black townships, only blacks have rights. In our economy, in sports, and in social fields, there has been progress. There is no law against blacks visiting whites. There are certainly laws -- we'll discuss them tomorrow.

Vice President Mondale: I'm afraid I must leave. I have a phone call booked to the President, and I can't keep the President waiting. If you had a Deputy Prime Minister, he would feel the same way about you.

Prime Minister Vorster: I don't have one.

Vice President Mondale: I know your problem.

The meeting adjourned at 1800.



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