



FROM: THE RT. HON. JULIAN AMERY, M.P.

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Dear Margaret,

R16

I was in South Africa in the second part of October and had talks with Ministers in Pretoria as well as businessmen and others in Johannesburg.

I put down below a few thoughts on some of the main issues in Southern Africa.

Namibia

South African Ministers appreciate that the Reagan administration is the most friendly American Government they are likely to find. They will accordingly cooperate sincerely with Washington though that doesn't mean that they won't fight their own corner hard.

The Namibia issue is not simple as you will know. Agreeing constitutional principles is almost as difficult as agreeing a detailed constitution. In what they ~~ask~~ *ask call* "Phase II" the administrative problems - status of Civil Servants, relations with UN, provision for law and order etc. - bristle with difficulties. I should be surprised if the timetable for "independence" could be completed even in theory, before the early summer of 1983. And, of course, the local SWA parties may prove difficult and can count on a good deal of support within the Nationalist Party itself.

Basically this is a tougher problem than Rhodesia. The FCO wanted to get rid of the Rhodesia problem. The South Africans don't really want to get rid of Namibia and will try to avoid doing so until it seems a reasonably safe proposition.

Then there is the question of how to enforce constitutional safeguards even if they are agreed. A lot here will depend on the wider context under which Independence comes about. To risk a SWAPO victory in SWA while neighbouring Angola remains a one-party state, virtually occupied by the Soviets and Cubans, could be very dangerous for South African and indeed Western interests. Short of a South African reconquest of the territory, there would be little to stop a SWAPO Government calling in Cubans or other Soviet allies from Angola.

If, on the other hand, the Soviets and Cubans were withdrawn from Angola, if, moreover, the Angolan Opposition parties - UNITA and FNLA - were recognised in some form or other a SWAPO victory in Namibia would not present much of a danger to South African or to other interests generally and any subsequent SWAPO regime could be controlled or contained.



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This issue, of course goes beyond the remit of the 5 power Contact Group and will be mainly for discussion between Washington and Pretoria. I suspect however, that in practice, progress over Namibia may well depend, as far as Pretoria is concerned, on how far we can move towards the decolonisation of Angola. It is, to say the least, a little odd to insist on free elections in Namibia and the withdrawal of "foreign" troops when Angola has never had elections of any kind and is occupied by Warsaw Pact and Cuban forces.

For my own part I think it would be to our advantage to link the two questions of Namibia and Angola. If we could get the Soviets out of Angola militarily and politically, this would be a great gain. If we cannot, it might well be better to let Namibia go on as it is.

Rhodesia/Zimbabwe

I did not go to Zimbabwe but discussed the situation with both South Africans and Rhodesians like Harold Hawkins and Peter Walls. Their general impression was pretty pessimistic. The whites have been leaving to and through South Africa in even larger numbers than the published figures suggest. The farmers of course have to stay because they cannot liquidate their assets and many older people choose to stay. The main drain is among the under 50s, particularly technicians, skilled workers and civil servants. The effect on the economic and administrative infrastructure is already visible.

This process seems likely to continue as the Mugabe regime adopts policies and strikes attitudes increasingly unfriendly to the whites. Nkomo and his friends are equally unhappy at the prospect of a one party state. Muzorewa and Sithole may already be in personal danger. The advent of North Korean arms and instructors has inevitably increased the sense of uncertainty.

I don't believe the South Africans are deliberately seeking to destabilise Zimbabwe. But they could do so and have made it plain that they will not tolerate any practical support for the African National Congress. They are prepared for everyday cooperation but on the basis of reciprocity and mutual respect. They are not prepared to accept alleged internal political pressures on Mugabe as justifying unfriendly rhetoric or gestures.

How Zimbabwe will develop may well turn on how the Namibia problem is solved. If it is accompanied by the Soviet/Cuban withdrawal from Angola the prognosis could be hopeful. Otherwise a steady deterioration seems more likely.



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General

The South African economy remains very strong and its growth rate impressive. Notable growth areas, I was told, are Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and the Phillipines. Trade with Black Africa continues to grow and increasingly openly.

Inspite of many previous disappointments the South Africans seem convinced that their rapprochement with the United States is for real, because dictated by genuine strategic and economic considerations.

Discussion about internal reforms continue but are bogged down at the moment by the boycott of Coloured and Asian councils by their community leaders. The Prime Minister is also under growing pressure from his breakaway right. But he, Pik Botha, and General Malan make up a strong team.

Looking ahead I have a hunch that South Africa may move away from the Westminster type to a more presidential system. This would enable the President to nominate ministers and officials from other races without undermining the basic structure of white supremacy.

Ted Heath's speech in South Africa was coldly received, so I was told by half a dozen people who heard it. The more sophisticated assessed it as directed to Social Democrat and Liberal opinion in Britain. Ministers resented that he had been their guest the day before but gave no indication of what he was going to say. Even opponents of the Government regretted his demand for "one man one vote". Coming from a former Tory PM it was bound to give the impression that the much lesser but still substantial reforms now under discussion would earn South Africa no good will abroad.

Julian
Julian Amery

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.

PS. Sorry for the delay in sending this letter but I had to go to Poland between drafting and signing it.