

PERSONAL AND IN CONFIDENCE

South Africa



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 December 1980

*La. Amery - 4/11*

*Dear Julian*

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 30 October to the Prime Minister. I am sorry that I have not written to you earlier but I wanted to deal with your points in some detail.

I agree that the war in South West Africa/Namibia is indeed on a comparatively small scale and the impact of SWAPO operations on overall South African policy slight. Nevertheless, it is significant in the lives of a good many Namibians who find themselves caught between SWAPO attacks on the one hand and security measures on the other. The number of incidents and casualties is increasing. South African cross-border raids cause only a temporary decline in the number of incidents and the South Africans themselves admit that there is no shortage of recruits to SWAPO. I conclude that SWAPO's military impact could well increase.

As you know, the results of the second tier elections have now been declared. You were right to predict that the National Party (AKTUR) would retain a firm hold among the white electorate. Results in the black elections were mixed. The DTA made a clean sweep

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Rt Hon Julian Amery MP

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of the Herero but lost a constituent party of the Namibia National Front among the third largest black group, the Damara. Both the South Africans and the DTA have claimed that these results will have no effect on the negotiations. I hope they are right.

I appreciate the reasons for South African distrust of the United Nations. But the South Africans consistently disregard the distinction between the various parts of the UN, notably between the General Assembly and the Security Council. I am convinced that Dr Waldheim and his staff, under the supervision of the Security Council, would do a good job in supervising the elections. The South Africans ought to be satisfied with the set of measures put forward by Mr Urquhart recently in Pretoria to demonstrate the validity of the Secretariat's repeated promises to avoid favour to any one group. I have in mind the promise to sever Mr Ahtisaari's links with the heavily biased Council for Namibia and to end UN funding of, and publicity for, SWAPO once South Africa has agreed to implementation. Furthermore, the demilitarized zone is not one-sided. The zone would extend for fifty kilometres north and south of the border. SWAPO bases would be withdrawn from the zone north of the border and UN forces would patrol the whole zone with complete freedom. The UN would check on Angolan and Zambian observation of their commitment to prevent any breaches of the cease-fire emanating from SWAPO bases in their territories.

There is nothing new about General Assembly expressions of support for SWAPO. South Africa was aware of the problem when they agreed to the Five's proposal in

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April 1978. The Secretary-General has no powers to revoke such General Assembly resolutions. But the UN team in Namibia will be working to the mandate of the Security Council, not the General Assembly.

What we have to do now is to concentrate on the fact that, by South Africa's own admission, their concerns over security during the transition have been largely met. Failure to reach a settlement now would be more damaging to efforts to prevent the spread of communist influence than a nationalist government in Namibia. The party which wins the elections will have to take account of the geographical, political and economic realities of Namibia's relationship with South Africa. Even Nujoma, in public and private comments has given indications that he is sufficiently pragmatic to be aware of this. South African co-operation in the final stages before independence would set Namibia on a positive course, whereas an intensification of the fighting, which would inevitably follow a breakdown in negotiations, would simply benefit the Soviet Union and its allies. We want to build on Angola's links with the West and prevent the Soviet Union from strengthening its position in Southern Africa: but this would be very difficult to achieve without a settlement in Namibia.

I appreciate that the South African Government are concerned about the domestic implications of implementation of the UN plan, to which they are formally a party. Their wish to ensure that the internal parties in Namibia are associated with the final decision is understandable. An all-parties conference will make this possible. In this regard, Dr Waldheim has proposed in his latest report to

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/ the Security Council (which I enclose) a pre-implementation meeting to be held in January with March as the target date for a cease-fire and the start of the transition. We hope that this conference will enable all those concerned to establish a measure of mutual trust in order to allow a final decision to be taken. There is still some way to go.

If all went well, there would be no need for a debate on sanctions in respect of Namibia. I note your view about the desirability of a UK veto if things were to go badly. At present our efforts are directed to avoiding a situation in which the possibility of sanctions has to be considered.

I have written frankly to you to ensure that you are aware of our approach to the main issues involved. I know you will treat my letter with suitable discretion.

*J. P. Carrington* z

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