

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



112, EATON SQUARE,
SW1W 9AA

TEL: 01-235 1543
01-235 7409

Prime Minister.

A.S.C. 12/3.

ms

9th March, 1984.

810 PPS

Dear Margaret,

Many thanks for your letter of 24th February replying to mine and the papers enclosed with it about our relations with South Africa.

Since receiving your letter I have paid a short visit to Botswana where I had very full talks with the President and the Vice President as well as with members, black and white, of the business community and with our High Commissioner.

I was very struck by the optimism which prevailed about the change in relations between the Front Line States and South Africa. Botswana has, of course, always been very realistic with its relations with the Republic.

Two points from the talks are perhaps worth reporting to you.

1. When asked how independent was the "homeland" of Bophutetswana, the President replied that it had virtually complete independence but that as its people had access to South African aid they were inhibited from trading with the outside world or sending their students to other countries.

Asked whether he was interested in a possible junction between Botswana and Bophutetswana, he said this would present difficulties as, quite apart from the geographical break-up of Bophutetswana, they were the more populous and prosperous area. Chief Mangope, the paramount chief of the "homeland" is a first cousin of the Vice President of Botswana.

2. The Vice President of Botswana when asked about the negotiations between Mozambique and South Africa said that he thought that Machel could not have held out for many weeks longer if he had not come to the conference table.

In the few talks I had in Johannesburg on the way back I was struck by the extent to which South African based business is already opening up in Mozambique and plans to do the same further north.

This letter needs no reply but I am copying it to Geoffrey Howe for information.

L. Sw.,
Julian.

Julian Amery

The Rt, Hon, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, MP

South Africa : Relats Pt 3



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