MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~SECRET~~/NODIS/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
Amb. R. F. Botha, Ambassador of the
    Republic of South Africa
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
    for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Friday, May 14, 1976
    5:00 p.m.

PLACE: The Secretary's Office
    Department of State

Kissinger: I hope you have noticed that in my speeches in Africa I have made a sharp distinction between you and the others [between South Africa on the one hand and Rhodesia and Namibia on the other].

Botha: I have made careful notice and I have reported this to my government. I thought Senator Percy was sympathetic.

Kissinger: We talked before about how we saw the situation. If we hadn't moved, I foresaw a coalition building up increasingly which would then confront you. It still may happen.

I am ready to meet your Prime Minister or Foreign Minister somewhere -- it would be better if it were not in South Africa.

Botha: We believe there is no substitute for personal diplomacy. I would like you to meet with my Prime Minister.

If you come to South Africa, there is Swaziland and Botswana, etc., you could visit.

Kissinger: I could only stop a day or so, but let's explore both thoughts. I will be in Europe later in June and I could meet anywhere there.

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AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON Imp. to det.

Botha: I will report your suggestion.

Kissinger: My idea is the best way to slow things down in Rhodesia is to make it an African issue -- that is, to keep the Cubans and the others out.

We need a platform from which to talk to Black Africa -- and talk to you. I don't have a clear-cut idea of what to do -- nor do I think we have to set a record for action.

But we have to move enough to preempt the Cubans. If we can get the Cubans out, we will be dealing with a new situation. If we can separate the South African issue from Rhodesia it will give more time to deal with South Africa -- unless Rhodesia is settled in a way that accelerates the problem.

Botha: I have asked my Foreign Minister to make a statement supporting some elements of your speech and trip.

Kissinger: If he could say something which would show that you are not a totally reactionary, racist state.

Botha: We have never shared power. Smith -- in the Constitution-- has. We are for majority rule but through separate states. We are for the same goal.

Kissinger: We are not trying to reform you. We are trying to prevent the radicalization of Black Africa and a race war. We want to avoid your having to face a coalition of 46 African states -- supported by the Cubans, North Koreans, North Vietnamese, or whatever. I don't have any ideas for a solution. If you had made these states independent 10 years ago it would have been easier. There is no reason Transkei is less viable than the Gambia.

[They discussed meeting arrangements for one or two days, probably in Switzerland between the 22nd and 24th of June. There would be some plenary and some private meetings.]

Botha: We have nowhere to go. We are not like the British or the Portuguese. We will fight to the last man.

Kissinger: I think history is against you, but we want to buy time at least. Perhaps different perceptions will develop if we can get the black states involved in development rather than organizing against the whites.

Botha: My Prime Minister will have some problems meeting with your Department people.

✓ K/Botha 14 May 76

K I hope you have noticed I have made sharp distinctions but say nice others

B I have made careful notice & have reported to my Govt. & that Perez was saying.

K We talked before how we saw a gt. If [...] hadn't moved, I foresee a coalition building up increasingly which would then confront you. Still may happen.
I am ready to meet your PM or FM somewhere — better not in SA.

B We believe in [...] for personal diplomacy. I would like you to meet w/ my PM.
If you came to SA, there is Swaziland, Botswana, etc.

K I could only stay a day or so, but let's explore both this. I believe I'm free later June & could meet anywhere.

B I will report your say.

K My idea is a first way to slow things down in Rhodesia is to make it —

— an African issue — it, [...] Cubans, etc out.
We need a platform from which to talk to Black Africa — and talk to you.
I don't have a clear cut idea of what Rhodesia thinkers have to set a mind for action.
But we have to move away to prevent Cuba. If we can get Cubans out, we will be dealing w/ a new set.
If we can separate SA issue from Rhodesia it will give more time to deal w/ SA — unless Rhodesia is settled in a way it accelerates [...].

B I have asked my FM to make a statement supporting some elements from your speech & trip.

K If he could say something which would show that you are not a totally reactionary, racist state.

B. We have never shared power. Southern as a court — has. We are for majority rule but there separate state. We are for some goal.

K We are not trying to reform you. We are trying to prevent radicalization of black Africa & a race war.

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We want to avoid you having
to fear a coalition of 46 African
states — supported by Cubans, N.
Koreans, NUNee, or whatever.
I don't have any idea for a solution.
If you had made those states indep't
18 years ago it would have been easier.
There is no reason Transkei is not
less viable than Gambia.

(Discussed meeting arrangements
1-2 days, prob in Switz but ≈ 2-24
June. Some plenary + some
private mtgs.)

B. We have no where to go. We are not
like a Brit or a Port. We will fight
to a last man

K — I think history is against you,
but we want to buy time at least.
Perhaps chg. perceptions will chg if
we can get black states involved
in dialogue rather than organizing
against the whites.

B My PM will have pvt mtg w/
your dept. people.