

SECRET

1

MEETING BETWEEN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND AMBASSADOR  
H NICKEL : PRETORIA 22 NOVEMBER 1985

---

also present: Mr T M Carney, US Embassy  
Mr D W Steward, DFA

The Minister handed Ambassador Nickel his letter of 22 November 1985 to Secretary Shultz.

Ambassador Nickel, after studying the letter, said that he was pleased to have the South African paper. He added that the Angolans were keen to talk at this stage. He noted that South Africa had come back on the points which the US had made. He would pass it on for attention.

Ambassador Nickel said that he was interested in the pot-stirring on Mandela.

Minister Botha replied that the UDF had started these rumours because they wanted the foreign correspondents in Cape Town, away from the Pretoria summit.

Ambassador Nickel observed that the length of Mandela's stay in hospital and his negotiations with his lawyers made it interesting.

Minister Botha replied that he could not say anything at this stage, except that nothing was ever final. He could not talk at this stage. It was becoming increasingly clear that Mandela and his lawyer did not see eye to eye on all issues. It had started with this doctor business.

SECRET

2

Ambassador Nickel said that Mandela's lawyer operated in an interesting way.

Minister Botha said that the Government would not exploit it. Things should be allowed to develop. He could, however, tell the Ambassador that the operation had improved relations. It would have been a fatal mistake to have acceded to their requests. Mandela had known that his life was at stake. He did not want bystanders.

Ambassador Nickel replied that the US would be following this with great interest. He then said that he was worried about the disturbances in Mamelodi.

Minister Botha replied that South Africa had released Nkumalo who had then proceeded to stir up these riots. He (Nkumalo) was responsible for this situation.

Ambassador Nickel said that the Embassy had employees there who had been on the scene. They said the meeting was given only three minutes to disperse.

Minister Botha replied that the Ambassador did not have all the facts. By that time the mob had already burned down several houses. Shots had been fired into other homes. The Ambassador should not just accept one version.

Ambassador Nickel noted that people had been staggered by it and not just the militants. He then handed the Minister the Geneva communiqué. There had been some discussion of Afghanistan but no mention had been made of Angola.

Minister Botha observed that he would have hoped that President Reagan would have referred to Geneva at least.

SECRET

3

Ambassador Nickel said that he did not know how long they had spent on this question. However, the United States was glad to have South Africa's letter.

Minister Botha replied that the MPLA's position was bad, except for the help which they received.

Ambassador Nickel asked if there was any indication that there might be a revival of the offensive before the end of the year.

Minister Botha replied that there were Cuban brigades in the vicinity. South Africa had been worried that the Soviets might have tried to do something before the summit. Gorbachev had had an elementary offer to make - that he would spend less, if the US spent less. If they adopted too high a profile on Angola, it would not have been to their advantage. It would have been foolish of them.

Ambassador Nickel said that the Embassy had received a briefing paper on Geneva and if the DFA wished it, it would be happy to give a briefing on what had happened.

85112702u12