

cc OPS
Master

CONFIDENTIAL

ORIGINAL



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T135/A/85

Uniegebou
Pretoria

MB 5/1/2-SP
MB 10/1/5

12 July 1985

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 10 July 1985 and for the frankness and promptness of your reply. It is my opinion that it is only through an open and frank exchange of views that constructive dialogue can be conducted.

Regarding your reference to the problems with which you have to contend in connection with the terrorist activities of the IRA, I am bound to say that I cannot agree with the parallel which you draw. The question which arises is what your Government would do if, over a period of two years, you had directed repeated appeals to a neighbour to take steps to curtail the activities in its territory of a terrorist organisation whose aim is the violent overthrow of your Government and not just, as the IRA sees it, the unification of a separate island. And if, in addition, these appeals were accompanied by a detailed exposition of the activities of the terrorists including names, addresses and acts of terror for which they were responsible. Material obtained during the operation in Gaborone on 14 June 1985 has provided adequate confirmation that the planning and execution of acts of terror in South Africa were being carried out from bases inside Botswana.

I do nevertheless agree with you that it would be preferable if the Government of Botswana could be convinced through diplomatic means to curtail the terrorist activities of the ANC conducted from its territory and to respond seriously to the proposals for closer co-operation between the respective security forces. It is not for lack of effort on the part of my Government that diplomacy has not to-date proved successful and it is for this reason that I appealed to you in my letter of 5 July 1985 to use the not inconsiderable influence of the British Government to convince the Government of Botswana and other Governments that a serious effort should be made to put a stop to terrorism in southern Africa.

CONFIDENTIAL

I refer to the personal message which you received from President Masire. While not calling into doubt the seriousness of his message to you, I wish to quote from a report by an official of my Government on a conversation which he had with Vice-President Peter Mmusi on 22 June 1985:

Vice-President Mmusi "... laid no blame on the South African Government for having carried out the raid. At all times he seemed to accept the fact that those who had been killed in the raid were in fact ANC terrorists and did not claim that they were refugees ..."

Vice-President Mmusi "... appeared (to be) surprised that the South African Defence Force had not attacked all the bases which they knew existed in Botswana." To which the South African official responded that to his knowledge all the bases attacked were in the suburbs of Gaborone and that the South African Defence Force had not attacked those targets which could have put the lives of many civilians at risk.

Vice-President Mmusi said that "it was a pity that the ANC should 'come between' the prospect of improved relations between South Africa and Botswana." He also "spoke about the evolution of 'apartheid' in South Africa. He acknowledged the fact that the State President was risking losing support from the electorate by taking steps to move away from 'apartheid'".

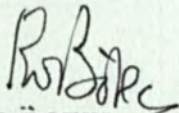
I have conveyed these confidential remarks of Vice-President Mmusi to you in order that you might be aware of the attitudes and positions adopted by African leaders towards my Government and officials of my Government who are continuously in contact with political leaders at the highest level in Africa. I would, however, not wish that Vice-President Mmusi's remarks which were passed in confidence should in any way prejudice his position.

I trust, Prime Minister, that the foregoing and my letter of 5 July 1985 will shed greater light on the events which led up to the South African action in Gaborone on 14 June 1985 and the aftermath, in the African context, of those events.

It is my hope that the leaders of southern Africa will be able to work together, with the active support and encouragement of Western leaders, to eliminate the scourge of terrorism from our sub-continent. Terrorism is indivisible and should not only be condemned on a selective basis.

I have noted your resistance to economic measures against South Africa and wish to express my appreciation of your stand. We do not like being obliged to take actions which might make matters harder for you and damage our bilateral relations, but I do feel that the time has come for the realities of southern Africa to be recognised.

Yours sincerely,



P W BOTHA
STATE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher M.P.
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON

