

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with Nelson Mandela, President of the ANC of South Africa

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Nelson Mandela, President of the ANC  
Interpreter: None  
Notetaker: Robert C. Frasure

DATE, TIME July 10, 1991, 11:30 - 11:40 a.m. EST  
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President telephoned Mr. Mandela concerning the lifting of sanctions against South Africa. (U)

Mr. Mandela: Yes sir. Good morning, sir. (U)

The President: Mr. Mandela, how are you? Congratulations on your election as President of the ANC. I think this is just de facto recognition of your outstanding leadership all along, not to disparage anyone. I just wanted to call and tell you of my decision to lift sanctions against South Africa, the sanctions imposed by the CAAA, you know, the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act imposed by Congress. (U)

The State Department and our bureaucracy have unanimously agreed that the five conditions set by Congress have been met, and I will be signing an Executive Order to that effect. As you know, other sanctions remain in place including the IMF and World Bank. (U)

I wanted to assure you of our continued support to you and others who are committed to negotiations. And I wanted you to know that I will continue to keep in touch with you on this. (U)

Mr. Mandela: Thank you, Mr. President. As I have pointed out before, we deeply appreciate the practice of constant consultation with us on matters of common interest. It has made a deep impression on us. (U)

The sanctions applied by the U.S. in the CAAA have helped immeasurably. And we are grateful for it. On lifting the sanctions, we differ on timing. (U)

Apparently you have no other alternative if South Africa has fulfilled the conditions. Our view differs in that we feel that the provisions in the Act have not been completed fully. But we do understand your action. (U)

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2

Nevertheless, I must say your action is premature. One can do damage if there are two parties talking to each other and a third party with a reputation for impartiality appears to be acting in favor of one or another of the parties. (S)

I know how you feel. And you don't mean to do that and you want to avoid that damage, especially because you have given the impression of being impartial. But you would be convinced that the Act has been fulfilled. (S)

But I still think it is premature. There are still political prisoners in prison. It is not correct for the U.S. to have its own definition. You should use the same definition we used in the Pretoria Minute. (S)

That is political prisoners are those convicted of politically motivated offenses. (S)

Then there are the prisoners in Bophuthatswana which doesn't exist under American law. You are acting against your own law. (S)

Thirdly, the abolition of Apartheid is not complete. There are funding differences in the social services, in education. (S)

Fourthly, the violence is raging in the country. That is impeding the free political activity. (S)

Nonetheless we appreciate the role of sanctions in getting discussion going. So we sincerely hope you will pressurize the South African government on negotiation. We recognize the extreme importance of the U.S. in this regard. (S)

The President: I appreciate your reasonable approach to negotiations. And I want to continue to share views and opinions on the situation on South Africa. (U)

I have a few more comments to make. (U)

Although sanctions will be lifted, there are others means to ensure South Africa continues toward reform. These include bilateral discussions through our Embassy and open, public discussions with the South African government and other negotiating parties in addition to using the upcoming G-7 summit in London. We'll continue to sustain the pressure to ensure that reform happens. (S)

The CAAA was enacted to encourage negotiations and I think it has done that. I did note that in your address to the recent ANC Congress you emphasized the need to move forward in negotiations. (S)

The negotiations process will be primarily an internal one but I'd like to continue to keep in touch with you. We continue to stress with the South African government the need to address the areas of education and housing for Black South Africans. (S)

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3

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Mr. Mandela: Thank you. I appreciate that. It is good to learn that. (U)

The President: Again, I want to continue to communicate with you on the negotiations process. I want my lifting of the sanctions to be a confirmation of U.S. law and to assure you that as President of the United States, I will do everything in my power as President to keep the pressure on the South African government to ensure democratic reforms continue. (U)

Mr. Mandela: Thank you very much. (U)

The President: Thank you and good bye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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