

June 11, 1981

**Letter from US President Reagan to South African
Prime Minister P.W. Botha**

Citation:

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Summary:

Reagan writes to South African Prime Minister R. F. "Pik" Botha regarding his meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information, Pieter W. Botha (no relation). Reagan expresses hope that relations between the two countries will be more cooperative in the future, and states that although the Namibia issue has complicated that relationship, it "can also be an opportunity to help stem the growth of Soviet influence in the region."

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 11, 1981

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Thank you for your personal message of May 12 delivered to me on the occasion of the visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information Botha to Washington. I feel that the Minister's visit was most productive. Our meetings were an important first step toward improving communication and dispelling some of the misunderstandings that have at times distorted relations between our two countries.

We are ready to work with you to develop a new, constructive relationship between the United States and South Africa solidly based on shared concerns, interests, and objectives.

As we said to Foreign Minister Botha, the problem of Namibia, which complicates our relations with European allies and with our friends in black Africa, is an obstacle to the development of a new relationship with South Africa. But given our shared concerns for the security of southern Africa, a settlement of the Namibia problem can also be an opportunity to help stem the growth of Soviet influence in the region. I am encouraged that our two governments have already begun to work to seek a settlement that will be responsive to our shared interests.

Please accept my congratulations on your April 29 election victory. With this clear mandate you will now be able to proceed with implementation of your vision of a South Africa changed, modern, and secure, with bright prospects for stability and development rooted in justice, and responsive to the needs of all South Africans. We recognize

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fully that developments in your country hold the key to long-term stability, development, and peace in the region. We are prepared to work with you in pursuing these shared objectives.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

His Excellency
Pieter Willem Botha
Prime Minister of the Republic of South Africa
Pretoria

FOLLOWING PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
MINISTER OF NATIONAL AFFAIRS, ON 15 JAN 1981
STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT REAGAN ON 15 JAN 1981
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN ADVISED BY THE
PRIME MINISTER OF SOUTH AFRICA THAT HE IS PLANNING TO VISIT
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND THE PRESIDENT
IS READY TO ACCEPT HIS INVITATION AND WILL BE AVAILABLE TO
MEET WITH HIM IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ON 22 JANUARY 1981.