

May 1, 1985

Letter from R.F. Botha to Lt-Col Manuel Rodrigues

Citation:

"Letter from R.F. Botha to Lt-Col Manuel Rodrigues", May 1, 1985, Wilson Center Digital Archive, South Africa Dept. of Foreign Affairs. Included in "Southern Africa in the Cold War, Post-1974," edited by Sue Onslow and Anna-Mart Van Wyk.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/118285>

Summary:

Letter from R. F. "Pik" Botha to the Angolan Minister of the Interior, decrying the movement of SWAPO militants into South African territory and the Angolan anti-South African propaganda campaign. Urges Angola to end the propaganda and to ensure that SWAPO attacks are not planned or executed from Angolan territory.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Transcript - English

Lt-Col Manuel Alexandre Rodrigues (Kito) Minister of the Interior

People's Republic of Angola

LUANDA

Dear Mr Minister

I am pleased that we shall soon have an opportunity of renewing the discussions which we conducted last year. As you are aware, there are a number of important issues of concern to our two countries which we will be able to discuss in Maputo on 9 May 1985. These issues include the utilization of the Ruacana/Calueque project and the situation which will arise along the SWA/Angola border after the Joint Monitoring Commission has completed its operations.

There are, however, two matters of more immediate concern to us which I should like to bring to your attention now.

Firstly, it is clear that SWAPO has taken advantage of the disengagement of South African forces from the Area-in Question, by moving large numbers into the area which has been vacated by South Africa. SWAPO activities have escalated sharply since 17 April 1985. Since then, it has carried out three unsuccessful attacks on South African positions at Okalongo on 20 April 1985, at Ruacana on 26 April 1985 and on a temporary base near Beacon 16 on 27 April 1985. The South African Government has reason to believe that SWAPO intends to escalate its attacks in the near future. These attacks are being planned in Angola and would be launched from Angolan territory.

Secondly, South Africa has been disturbed by inflammatory reports which have recently been disseminated by the Angolan media. According to these reports, South Africa's decision to withdraw its forces was a "disgusting political maneuver, despite the fact that the Angolan Government has repeatedly called for an urgent completion of the disengagement process." Other Angolan reports complained of the continuing presence of South African forces at Calueque, despite the fact that Angola had agreed to their presence there. Unsubstantiated allegations were made that South African aircraft had overflown Angolan territory and that the SADF was responsible for increasing tension along the border. However, during the whole of this period the JMC continued to function effectively and harmoniously and there was no trace of increased tension.

South Africa strongly urges the Angolan Government to take whatever steps may be necessary to ensure that SWAPO will not use Angolan territory to launch attacks on South West Africa. South Africa also wishes to point out that the anti-South African propaganda campaign of the Angolan media does not promote the cause of reasoned dialogue between our two countries.

South Africa believes that the Lusaka Agreement has, during the past 15 months, enabled both our countries to improve channels of communication with one another, to maintain peace between our forces and to make progress toward the solution of the problems of the region. It would be regrettable were anything to occur which might jeopardise this process.

Yours sincerely

RF BOTHA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS