

October 15, 1974
**Meeting between the Hon. Prime Minister and the
Zambians**

Citation:

"Meeting between the Hon. Prime Minister and the Zambians", October 15, 1974, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AJ 1975, 1/157/3, South African Department of Foreign Affairs Archives. Obtained by Jamie Miller.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/134629>

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

MEETING BETWEEN THE HON PRIME MINISTER AND
AND THE ZAMBIANS

15/10/74

P.M.: How are you?

Mark: Fine thanks.

Genl: I will withdraw, Sir.

P.M.: Ja, the weather is good.
You had a pleasant flight?

Mark: Yes, pleasant indeed, thank you Sir.

P.M.: Ja, the weather is good.

Mark: It has been very nice, and fortunately the flight
they are all very nice.

P.M.: Where did you land for fuel?

Mark: Yes, we did.

P.M.: Lourenço Marques?

Mark: I don't say, not yet. We landed in Ippington or Uppington...

P.M.: Uppington.

Mark: Yes, that's right. We landed there for fuel.

P.M.: Yes, it is just South of the Kalahari.

Mark: Yes, it is a rather nice place, it is cooler far than this place.
I found in Gaborone yesterday....

P.M.: I am rather surprised to hear that because by all accounts it
should be very much hotter there than it is here. Here at the
moment the weather is quite good.

Mark: Yes.

P.M.: It is hot in Pretoria and the Transvaal, at the moment.

ark: Yes.

P.M.: How's things in your country?

ark: Very well, it is warm up and dry.

M: Dry?

Mark: Yes, Sir.

M: You had Spring rains yet?

ark: Not yet, no Sir, but we expect them any time now. I also bring
greetings, personal greetings from President Kaunda.

M: Oh, thank you very much.

Mark: And President Khama which I visited yesterday.

P.M: Oh, give him my regards.

Mark: I was with President Nyere on Saturday and with President Samora on Friday evening....

P.M: Good heavens, then you must...

Mark: And the Prime Minister for the V.K (?) on Friday morning. So, I am very very tired.

P.M: I see yes, then you have had a very tight schedule.

Mark: Yes, but it is a real pleasure for us to be able to be here.

P.M: I am very pleased that you came and I think that we can have very fruitful exploratory discussions...

Mark: Yes.

P.m: and see whether we can come to an agreement and whether we can understand each other.

Mark: Yes.

P.M: As I see it, ^{if} there is a time to come to an understanding it is now, if this is the psychological moment and if this goes by, then anything is bound to happen. So as I see it, were are more or less on the cross roads - either we understand each other now or we fight later.

Mark: And I can assure you, Sir, no one wants to

P.m: Quite.

Mark: Because it is not necessary...

P.M: Well, if one must, but if can possibly be avoided, then I can give you the assurance that I don't want to go in for that sort of thing, if it is at all possible to settle things and to come to an understanding.

Mark: That's right.

P.M: I think we are in duty bound to do that, not only as far as our own countries are concerned, but as far as Southern Africa, and every body is concenred. As you rightly say in your paper now before me that fifteen years were spent to see whether you can solve/...

solve the problems of Southern Africa by war and it has proved futile. I heartily endorse those statements, and if we can arrive at a peaceful solution, which you can understand, will not naturally be a one-sided affair, there must be a two-way traffic, otherwise there is no traffic at all. Then we are not only in duty bound, but we are doing a service, not only to Southern Africa, but for that matter, to the whole of Africa, and through that we can show an example to the world which is badly in need of an example at the moment how to settle disputes, in spite of vicious enmities of the past.

Mark: Yes.

P.M: Tell me, just as a matter of interest, we might forget to come to it later, this civil aircraft that fell down in your country. What is the position?

Mark: The position...unfortunately I left to those preparing to leave.. it was the last thing....packing my brief case to go home. The Inspector-General of Police arrived with an urgent message and Director of Intelligence also around me at the same time...because they had feared that there might be ...the General on the aircraft ...and everything my going. nobody...

P.M: No, it is a small aircraft.

Mark: Yes, so that kept them a little bit later. So I sent a message very quickly to you, to inform your General that this had happened and thatticket to Mongo(?) But I left, I gave instructions....

In the suggestion that it is military aircraft....

P.M: No, it isn't.
....military....

Mark: No, no, it wasn't.

M: It was a small civil aircraft flying officials from South West Africa to the Caprivi.

Mark: Exactly, they know the position really, but unfortunately I was in the country and then they found some papers burnt. The

security people who went to look at the aircraft. And when they looked at the document they said that we won't let this people go immediately. Let's look up their documents, just in case. And in my absence no one would expedite...because

.....but yesterday I met the air commander just before I left. He confirmed that the people were really innocent. So either they must have arranged with the President that they either released them last night or that, at the very latest, they should be handed over today.

Well, I will be very pleased because it gives all sorts of rumours and speculations.....

Mark: No, I can assure you, Sir....

in the press and that sort of thing and at this stage it is best not to have that sort of thing.

No, I do assure you, they did ask for me to give them a basic station. I refused, I said you either hand them yesterday or at the very latest, today.

.M: Is the plane burnt?

ark: It is burnt.

.M: So it is no use.....

ark: No...apparently when they ran short of fuel, according to them, they tried to force landing. As they came in, they cut trees and so forth; they just crashed.

.M: So...

It is for that reason that I never fly in a small aircraft.

ark: But the President wanted me to assure you that there is no other reason except ... he last night briefed the air-commander and the army commander for they can give concrete instructions to their people. And I am quite sure, probably now I am here, he probably told them the reasons why.

Ja.

I was in a hurry to get the people out. I believe that he told them.

Now/...

P.M: Now, tell me about the discussions. It is up to you. Do you want the other gentleman with or do you want to discuss things with me alone?

Mark: It is partly up to you, Sir, but it would have been good perhaps for, if you think so, really I wouldn't say....it is up to you.

P.M: No. you are my guest. It is up to you to make your choice.

Mark: My culture doesn't agree, Sir. You make the suggestion. According to my culture it is much better for you to make the decision.the young man to be present.

P.M: No. by all means, if you want your assistant, I have no objection.

Mark: This is all right, yes, Sir.

M: Is he in your confidence?

Mark: Yes, very, very much so.

M: I have no objection, as for your namesake, and General van den Bergh, I have no objection if they are present. If you feel that they mustn't be present...

ark: No, Sir, he should be present...

M: Fine.

rk: Sir, I thought you should know that in my opinion we are now one team, trying to tackle our problems...

M: Yes, for that matter I am, as you might know or might not know at the moment, I am acting Minister of Foreign Affairs as well.

ark: Yes, Sir.

M: So, do you mind if I get Mr Fourie, The Secretary in? He is completely in my confidence.

arki: No, anyone who is in your confidence.

M: No, he is completely in my confidence and therefore if your man comes in, then we can let the others come in too.

rk: Yes, Sir.

M: Let's talk a little on before we get them in. You will want to have lunch first and fresh up and that sort of thing. Would you/...

you like to wash your hands?

Mark: No, Sir, I am all right, thank you.

P.M: And, how do you see the, just in general, before we come to the specific things, how do you see things in general?

Mark: Sir, I have now the opportunity of working with four, you know, leaders in this exercise, and all of them plus Prime Minister Chissanno in this case, five, that is President Kaunda, President Nyerere, President Khama, President Samora and Prime Minister Chissanno. they are all to a man saying there is no going back on their word on the manifesto in recognising South Africa, as an independent and sovereign state. And that, Sir, is the beginning over the basic principle in the recognition of one side of reality. The second side of reality is that they emphasise the human aspect of the problem, that, as President Nyerere put it in Jamaica, he put it this way that if the expressed fears that the black majority might be prejudiced against the white in Africa, but he said that if that happen then the black majority would lose their right of criticising Britain and America and other countries like that for their treatment of the black minority in their countries. Therefore, it is the responsibility of Africa to look at the white people in Africa as not merely people in Africa, but people of Africa. Yesterday,the BBC programme "Africa....." I heard your voice again on the issue of South Africa being part of Africa....

.M: We are just as much part of Africa as you are.

Mark: Exactly. And this is the premises which they are actually using and they therefore say very plainly, that there is no question of fighting South Africa at all. Everyone of them, Sir, - I happened to have been with President Khama as late as yesterday afternoon and he is the latest, believe me.

P.M: Why does he make such unfriendly noises?

(Laughter)

I have never made an unfriendly noise about him, why he should make it about me, I wouldn't know.

Mark: No, Sir, I think that we have to mis..... of the reality.... which he asked me to convey to you.....

P.M: As a matter of fact, whilst we are alone, I want to say that I have done him nothing but favours.

ark: No, that is true. We all accept this.

P.M: When he was, you know what have happened when he was very seriously ill?

ark: Yes, we appreciate that.

P.M: I fetched him, I put him in a hospital and I took him back and I don't mind telling you, that saved his life.

Mark: Exactly, Sir.

P.M: Now with the best will in the world I can't understand why the unfriendliness.

ark: No, I think....

P.M: Let him disagree with me, by all means, that's his right, I am not disputing that in any way.

ark: That is true, Sir.

P.M: But I can't understand that sort of neighbourliness.

ark: I think that the most important thing that really has emerged and which makes me happy, purely as a technician looking for solutions to problems, because there is no.....we have never settled down to implement the manifesto which the four presidents at one stage authorised me to try and do....

P.M: Which to this day you haven't sent me.

(Laughter).

ark: No, Sir, through

P.M: Yes, but the manifesto is as old as...how old is it now?

I took cognisance of it through the documents of United Nations.

ark: Yes, Sir, this I accept that problem, we didn't send...

P.M.: What about Mogadisho, is it off?

Mark: No, the Mogadisho, I told President Nyerere when I first reported on the Paris meeting, that I have never read..you must accept....as this is a confidential talk...I have never read the Mogadisho agreement...

P.M.: It makes two of us.

Mark: Because there isn't, I didn't bother to read it either, it was unrealistic to expect the manifesto, Lusaka manifesto's and I docked it in 1969, I docked it by the General Assembly in September/October 1969. And by 1970 we had to accept the language in the manifesto as we understand it, and naturally, I as the technician, knew that you would not read paragraph 20, you would probably emphasise only hard words used in other paragraphs. It needed communication to underline the things we would not go back on. So the Mogadisho declaration was really unrealistic to that extent, so we are not really implementing the Mogadisho agreement. And I discussed it with President Nyerere at length and he said that he himself never read the Mogadisho agreement.

P.M.: Now, further tell me this attitude, which I appreciate, let me say so at the outset, the attitude now adopted by the presidents that you have just mentioned. How is that shared by other leaders in Africa? Have you any idea?

Mark: This is in respect of attacking?

P.M.: No, this attitude of coming to an understanding?

Mark: Our strategy, is simply this at the moment, according to the four presidents, having recognised South Africa as an independent state, and for a long time we have been saying that the difference between South Africa and Rhodesia in two senses: first you were granted independence, secondly to 1910, and that President Nyerere on Saturday added, he said that in any case you were not at war against the British.....(laughter). So, for that reason there is a completely distinct difference

which/...

which we have to take into account because you are dealing with a political situation, so are we all. So, the attitude is that we should not involve too many people at the moment. If the front line states, decide that they will be friendly to you, those are the most important...

P.M: Yes, I appreciate that, but I am just inquisitive to know, supposing that happens, what do you expect will be their reaction

Mark: We think that we can deal with the situation, Sir, must depends upon the type of agreement that is finally, rather not agreement, solution which is finally found to the problems which they are opposing to you, Sir, and to which we are all together looking for a solution.

M: Now, where is President Mobutu in this?

ark: We don't think that there will be a problem with that, Sir. Because he is really busy with Angola at the present moment.

M: Are you on a good footing with him?

ark: Very good, Sir.

M: There are no problems?

ark: No problems. We have no problems with countries like Nigeria.

M: And Uganda?

ark: Well that's a different position, but it is very serious, I might say, Sir.

M: You tell me now, I have read so many reports, what is going on there?

ark: I think that there is still a lot of killing going on. You know President Obuto built a small and very effective air force, but the air force appears to have been a resisting in this discriminating of Tanzania and so forth, so that the air force officers has got rid of them. So really there is no Ugandan flying in the Ugandan air force. And all the senior officers in the army who ^{would} normally give good leadership and

direction, he also removed them. So what remains, I really know nothing.

P.M: But what happens to the day to day administration of the country?

Mark: Well, they move one step ahead of disaster and hope for the best.

P.M: But there must be economic chaos.

Mark: Very big, Sir. Very, very big. But these are the facts that I think we must take into consideration.

P.M: But don't people appreciate that in the years ahead it is more important to feed your people than anything else? The world is moving into the stage where those countries who can feed their people, that they will pull through and that the others will go under.

Mark: That is the tragedy, Sir.

P.M: Good administration and the standard of living of the people must be paramount.

Mark: Exactly. But that is where the tragedy of Uganda lies, and the Soviets, whom you know, feed on the existence of conflict, are ready. I had a big quarrel, I might tell you,.....

P.M: Are they in fact coming?

Mark: I believe they are, yes. But they are selling all the equipment which is really useless....vesica....brittle, you know, which are really useless. It doesn't know much of the equipment, but anything painted....

But then you see, the lives saved.....Somalia and then Uganda. But that is our worry, and that is why we feel that if we settle this problem and try and keep the Soviets at bay. I want to tell you quite frankly, Sir, which is the authority which my president has always given me, namely that we have no problem about China. Whenever they have built roads they have given technicians and they go.

P.M: Are you sure about that?

Mark: I am sure.

P.M: None of them remained behind in Tanzania?

Jar: No, Sir. This we have proved and President Nyerere is such a very independent-minded person that he would just not do it. And they themselves among the Moslems there, I am quite sure the General knows..... And at one stage they took deliberately three weeks in 71 just to try and disturb the nature of these people and there came back such fight that they have a different technique in approaching Africa and the other countries in the world, which allows us to respond because our response is depended on our new economic strength. If we go begging to them the....but otherwise they are not interested in that.

M: Well, as far as the Communists are concerned, be it Chinese or Russian Communism, then I still think you are supping with the devil and you must have a very long spoon if you want to survive.

rk: (Laughter) We have tried once....

: Whenever you are doing it, see that your spoon is very long.

rk: No, this much I can assure you that we are extremely aware, but..

: I am glad to get that assurance because it is a cause of worry whether they will remain and what will happen afterwards.

k: It is the Soviets who worry us. Because for them you must pay something it they had to be of assistance to you. Even when the Smith government, you know, closed the border, I took three months in going from the West of the United States and Canada right out to New-Zealand via the Soviet Union and so forth, and I was only able to get ailing(?) assistance from the Soviet Union, probably because they thought Zambia was not pro-Soviet Union. Well we did disagree on the invading of Czechoslovakia. Do you know of an instance in Africa where the Soviets have in fact materially helped the people?

ck: No..well, shall we say that they did assist when the French left Guinea, it was a limited scope,

and /...

and the Soviets did move in. But quite frankly, I wouldn't call Guinea a success story, because of it's disaster. So they are not an actual worrying point, because even President Sadat had to kick them out. The contrary is the case with the Chinese, because they do the simple technical things and learn technology and go back.

P.M: I hope you are right. I hope fermently that you are right.

Mark: So far, Sir. I think that I can tell you one thing, Sir, if you permit me. You know that naval exercises at the present moment are going on - you never had a statement from Zambia; you never had a statement from Tanzania, and this was in recognition of the independence of South Africa. And as long as these are not directed against us, then we don't have to make noise about it.

.M: But why the fight about our credentials?

Mark: I think this is a different issue, Sir, which the international communities is trying to apply, and when you asked us to lie low, we did lie low, and also told Tanzania that this is not expulsion, and therefore, the Minister, although he made some very bad remarks against Chief Matanzima and company....

.M: I think that it was shocking that he made those remarks.

ark: I can tell you that he shouldn't have made them.

.M: Because, let's understand each other very clearly, Chief Matanzima is as much the rightful leader of his people as anybody else.

ark: No, that is accepted, actually. We don't want to interfere in the internal affairs of South Africa.

.M: And you can also take that as red that he will be independent in two years time and he'll want to take his place in the African Unity Organisation. He will want to take his place in UNO. And I therefore, sincerely hope that there won't be put any stumbling blocks in his way.

Mark: I think, Sir, on my part it is perhaps important to stress the view of the people like President Nyerere, President Kaunda and President Khama, that there is no question of them interfering in the internal affairs of South Africa. That much I can say. In the other areas where we are seeking solutions, making a formula which they would like to sell to you, but they do not affect the general position of South Africa.

P.M: I am pleased to hear that and if that can be seen in the practice to be the case, it will naturally help things a lot.

Mark: In this case I would quote President Nyerere when he said on Saturday, he said that - knowing your very strong position on South West Africa - I still have to say because that's what he said. He said that - he addressed me as Mark - as soon as the question of Rhodesia and South West Africa are resolved, I am not going on with the liberation committee in Tanzania, that is the end. Anybody who wants to fight South African can go ahead, will not fight with them. That is the position of President Kaunda, Sir. That is the position of President Samora, Sir. That is the position of President Khama, Sir. And I can say this for them because they have stressed this now twice - after the Paris meeting and after the Lusaka meeting. There is no question of interfering in the internal affairs of South Africa. This is true, they may differ, on other things but then the Soviet Union is now criticised over it's treatment of the Jews.

.M: I don't know whether you have seen this magazine News Week.

Mark: Which issue, Sir?

.M: The issue where I spoke about....

Mark: Yes, Sir. I did see it.

.M: Did you read it?

Mark: Yes, Sir, I read it. I was very happy. It strengthened us because..... what they are saying is that having recognised the immense human problem South Africa is facing and knowing the

psychological/...

psychological atmosphere in South Africa, and that is also our problem because we have raised the feelings of the people so much it's for them, they think that we do need to be assisted by you in this part of the world to convince the other parts of the world that quite frankly you don't expect to deal with South Africa, in the manner in which we have dealt with other areas. Because nowhere, Sir, I hope I am right, no where in the manifest to.....decolonialisation in South Africa.

P.M: Unfortunately that's the talk. You know that we're colonialists etc., etc. which is of course utmost nonsense.

Mark: Well, it means that you will have to examine the delegations which are saying that. If it is in relation to South Africa, then it is misinformed.

P.M: You know, the interest is in fact if you look at our history, we didn't only fight British colonialism we were probably the first to fight British colonialism, we were the first to fight Dutch colonialism. You might know or you might not know that in 1795 already we declared two republics in this country; the Republic of Graaf Reinet and the Republic of Swellendam when we tried to rid ourselves of Dutch colonialism. So when it comes to colonialism and fighting colonialism, we were the very first people to do just that. It might also interest you to know that for instance as far as the Transkei and other Black Homeland are concerned, that if the British did not annex them, they would have been independent to this very day. We didn't annex them, we didn't bring them. They were brought in by the British, same as the British brought in Botswana and Lesotho and Swaziland. It wasn't our policy, it was the British policy pure and simple.

marks: I think this is perhaps where the four presidents appealing to you for understanding, that genuinely you recognise the problem. There is no doubt about it. You have a very difficult
will
public opinion, ... to ... the situation first to ...

enable, when it is possible for you to take whatever measures...

P.M: But you can readily understand, you see every time a mine is laid in the Caprivi and people are killed and white and black have been killed that way, make no mistake about that, and the moment that a South African policeman is killed, you can readily understand that it makes it more difficult to diffuse....

Mark: I think this is where we come to methodology, Sir. which they asked to to try and put forward and we have discussed..

P.M: No, we will come to that business this afternoon.

Mark: They tried to say is it possible for you to accept the two positions, because it strengthens the case of South Africa. That the question of South West Africa having been internationalised, it is extremely difficult for the four to go back, to show that they are going back, that they are prepared to participate together in the formula...

M: No, my attitude, and I expressed in public, I said it to Waldheim and I said it to Escher and I said it to everybody, it's public knowledge, my attitude is as far as South West Africa is concerned it is not for me to prescribe but it's not for Uno and anybody else to prescribe, the peoples of South West Africa will make their own choice. It is for them to decide their future, it is not for me to decide their future, it is not for anybody else to decide their future. It is for them and them alone to decide their future and I think that is a fair enough statement.

rk: I think that is a very important statement, Sir, which, if it were put, and then the question of methodology becomes simpler.

M: Of?

rk: Method. Because then we are just looking for the formula, which you were to help us to show the situation on the other side.

I was joking, Sir, because next year is the problem. We must say the OAU summit must be after 25th June...

- Mark: Before, before, yes it must be after the 25th of June because we don't want General Amin to represent the OAU in Lourenço Marques for celebrations. In their independence celebrations, we would rather have....
- P.M: Why will he be a representative?
- Mark: Because he will be the chairman. Between the 1975/76 session ^{Sied Berre'} period, ~~Said Berre'~~ is the current chairman, he is representing..... But next year the meeting is being held in Kampala unless something happens. It is difficult to know what will happen. If the summit is held in Kampala, it means that General Amin will be the chairman over the session 1975/76 and it is not good for us..
- P.M: It is not good for your image at all.
- Mark: It is a very embarrassing situation.
- P.M: I can appreciate that.
- Mark: Andthat is where I am telling my - I have to callyou my friends now - because I genuinely believe that we are being in sympathy... But if we are able to make certain moves and prevent any further resolutions which are unrealistic, which don't help diffuse the situation, we would go a long way and so I counted the number of important meetings which are coming next year.
- P.M: And they are?
- Mark: And they are a conference of the Council of the Ministers of the OAU in February,
- P.M: February?
- Mark: Yes, Sir.
- P.M: I must make a note of that.
- Mark: ...Council of Ministers of the OAU in February, it is the budget session but normally resolutions are passed.
- P.M: Council of Foreign Ministers?
- Mark: Yes, Council of Foreign Ministers, and then after that in April we have the Commonwealth Conference and I didn't attend the senior officials' meeting, I was busy with....

P.M.: Commonwealth Conference, where is that being held?

Mark: In Jamaica, Sir, in Kingston.

P.M.: Jamaica? And the Council of Ministers?

Mark: The Council of Ministers is in Kampala, Sir.

P.M.: Kampala?

Mark: Yes, Sir.

P.M.: And then?

Mark: That then must be followed by Commonwealth Conference, summit in Jamaica in April, and then followed by OAU summit.

P.M.: Is that in June?

Mark: We would like to make it after (laughter) we would like to make it before June. Just a second, Sir. 25th June is independence day. Our strategy is that Siad Barré represents the OAU that means the summit will be after 25th June, yes.

P.M.: After 25th June.

Mark: After.

P.M.: That's very interesting.

Mark: Then we have the General Assembly, Sir, the session of the General Assembly.

P.M.: When is that?

Mark: In September.

P.M.: September..

Mark: So, Sir, you have...

P.M.: Will you invite me to that General Assembly...?

Mark: We hope so, if we can get the

P.M.: Where will that be held?

Mark: The General Assembly at the United Nations.

P.M.: Of course, yes.

Mark: In the middle, Sir, we have the Member International Organisation Conference and all of them all the time pass resolutions.

P.M.: Good heavens.

Mark: So our strategy is that we should try and move in such a way that

- I was telling my friends that I wish it were possible to end
- to create a situation in which the sanctions are ended during the
current session of the General Assembly.

P.M: This one now?

Mark: This one - that means by say end December, if through a programme
which we have discussed, there is a possibility of reaching some
understanding which makes the Rhodesian government yield to
which I suggest we should so and I have some suggestions, of
course, it is a two-way traffic.

P.M: No, I will come to that. I think that we must get the other
people in and then you can lunch at your time. Then we can
start at half past two.

Mark: I recall, when I look at these we will try and show that there is
a diffusion....

P.M: No, I can see the method.

Mark: Then we will leave the problems here because they are
very difficult, it is not a seven day wonder, it is an extremely
tricky trap(?)

P.M: You've got quite a nice view from here. This is parliament here,
this building here, from over here.....this is parliament.
Well it was started in 1870 somewhere.....

Hier kom die ander persone nou ook in.

Mnr Vorster stel voor dat hulle nou gaan eet.