MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
Amb. R. F. Botha, Ambassador of the
Republic of South Africa
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Friday, May 14, 1976
5:00 p.m.

PLACE: The Secretary's Office
Department of State

Kissinger: I hope you have noticed that in my speeches in Africa I have made a sharp distinction between you and the others [between South Africa on the one hand and Rhodesia and Namibia on the other].

Botha: I have made careful notice and I have reported this to my government. I thought Senator Percy was sympathetic.

Kissinger: We talked before about how we saw the situation. If we hadn't moved, I foresaw a coalition building up increasingly which would then confront you. It still may happen.

I am ready to meet your Prime Minister or Foreign Minister somewhere -- it would be better if it were not in South Africa.

Botha: We believe there is no substitute for personal diplomacy. I would like you to meet with my Prime Minister.

If you come to South Africa, there is Swaziland and Botswana, etc., you could visit.

Kissinger: I could only stop a day or so, but let's explore both thoughts. I will be in Europe later in June and I could meet anywhere there.
Botha: I will report your suggestion.

Kissinger: My idea is the best way to slow things down in Rhodesia is to make it an African issue -- that is, to keep the Cubans and the others out.

We need a platform from which to talk to Black Africa -- and talk to you. I don't have a clear-cut idea of what to do -- nor do I think we have to set a record for action.

But we have to move enough to preempt the Cubans. If we can get the Cubans out, we will be dealing with a new situation. If we can separate the South African issue from Rhodesia it will give more time to deal with South Africa -- unless Rhodesia is settled in a way that accelerates the problem.

Botha: I have asked my Foreign Minister to make a statement supporting some elements of your speech and trip.

Kissinger: If he could say something which would show that you are not a totally reactionary, racist state.

Botha: We have never shared power. Smith -- in the Constitution-- has. We are for majority rule but through separate states. We are for the same goal.

Kissinger: We are not trying to reform you. We are trying to prevent the radicalization of Black Africa and a race war. We want to avoid your having to face a coalition of 46 African states -- supported by the Cubans, North Koreans, North Vietnamese, or whatever. I don't have any ideas for a solution. If you had made these states independent 10 years ago it would have been easier. There is no reason Transkei is less viable than the Gambia.

[They discussed meeting arrangements for one or two days, probably in Switzerland between the 22nd and 24th of June. There would be some plenary and some private meetings.]

Botha: We have nowhere to go. We are not like the British or the Portuguese. We will fight to the last man.

Kissinger: I think history is against you, but we want to buy time at least. Perhaps different perceptions will develop if we can get the black states involved in development rather than organizing against the whites.

Botha: My Prime Minister will have some problems meeting with your Department people.
A. Shown and agreed upon.

B. Shown and agreed upon.

C. Shown and agreed upon.

D. Shown and agreed upon.
We want to assure you that
of the African
states - supported by Libya, N.
Camero, N. Sudan, or whatever.
I don't know any idea for solution.  
Jama had much these states involved.
I fear says it would have been better.
There is no reason Trencher is not
her with them Gambia.

(Disussed meeting arrangements
1-2 days post-in Swaziland 17-24
Jama. Some planning some
furtherity.)

2. We have no military, it is not
like a British that we wish fight
the last man.

3. I think better to join you,
but we want to try time on least.
I propose you please write it
in imperial which states involved
in elegant rather than anyway
against white.

4. My file will come join you of
your dept. please.