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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS  
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT  
AND

KENNETH D. KAUNDA  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

STATE DINING ROOM

10:10 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. President, Mrs. Kaunda, Kaweche Kaunda, distinguished guests:

Let me say that Mrs. Ford and I are extremely delighted to have you, Mr. President, your family and your distinguished guests with us here this evening. It has been a great pleasure to talk to your lovely wife and to know of your delightful family, and on behalf of Mrs. Ford and myself, we extend and wish to you our very, very best.

Your visit to Washington is a mark of friendship that has existed between our two nations since Zambia gained her independence in 1964.

America knows and respects you, Mr. President, but also I should say that in the modern history of Zambia and the history of Kenneth Kaunda, they are inseparable. Your moral and intellectual leadership guided your country to independence, and for that we praise you.

Your leadership has made your young nation an example of respect and admiration throughout the world. The American people join me in saluting you for your accomplishments, your dedication and your wisdom in a controversial and difficult world.

We ask that you convey to your people in Zambia our admiration for them and for you and our greetings.

Mr. President, we have been following developments in Southern Africa with great, great interest. For many years the United States has supported self-determination for the peoples of that area, and we continue to do so today.

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We view the coming independence of Mozambique, Angola and the island territories with great satisfaction, just as we viewed the independence of Guinea and Guinea-Bassau just last year.

May I say, Mr. President, America stands ready to help the emerging countries, the emerging nations and to provide what assistance we can and we know, Mr. President, that these new States will continue to look to you for wise, wise counsel as they build to nationhood in the future.

Much still remains to be done in Southern Africa. In this connection, Mr. President, we welcome your commitment to change through peaceful negotiations and understanding between the parties concerned, rather than through recourse to violence.

We deeply believe that patient diplomacy will bear fruit, and we promise our continued efforts and our support as you seek, with others, to resolve these problems at the conference table.

Mr. President, in my April 10 speech to the Congress and to the American people, I noted that America is developing a closer relationship with nations of Africa, and I said that Africans must know that America is a true and concerned friend, reliable both in word as well as in deed.

Your visit, Mr. President, coming so soon after that occasion, is most timely for all of us. I hope that you will take back to your countrymen and to all Africans our renewed pledge of friendship.

Our wide-ranging discussions, Mr. President, this afternoon after my return from some of our historic celebrations of our 200th, or Bicentennial, anniversary covered matters of common interest and concern, and it confirmed the relationship between your country and my country.

There is, however, one area, Mr. President, of mutual interest which we tacitly did not discuss. I have since found, tonight, from your lovely wife, that we have a close and intimate interest in a special area. I understand that you do enjoy playing golf. (Laughter)

I feel sure, Mr. President, that our common problems, nationally, internationally, bilaterally, on some occasions, in the future can best be resolved by a little competition on the links. (Laughter) I intend to make an honest effort to see if our friendship cannot be broadened by such an experience.

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So, I say to you, Mr. President, to your lovely wife, and your son, and your colleagues here this evening, let me propose a toast to you, to the Republic of Zambia and to the continuing relations between our two countries.

To you, Mr. President, and to your Republic and to your wonderful people.

PRESIDENT KAUNDA: Mr. President, Mrs. Ford, brothers and sisters:

I first want to express my deep appreciation and gratitude for inviting me to visit Washington, D.C. I also thank you, the Government, and the people of the United States, for their warm welcome and the kind hospitality given to my wife and the entire Zambian delegation.

Mr. President, we are happy to be in Washington, D.C. It is a very brief visit, but since we come for specific objectives, it is not the duration that matters, but results.

So far, we have done a lot. We find we have a lot in common on vital issues affecting mankind. Our discussions have been characterized by a spirit of frankness and cordiality.

This spirit, coupled by the definition of areas of urgent action, should move the U.S. and Africa closer toward the attainment of our common objectives.

We come, Mr. President, to America with a clear purpose. We simply want to be understood. We seek American understanding of Africa's objectives and America's fullest support in the attainment of these objectives.

The relations between Zambia and the United States cause me no concern because they are cordial, although there is room for improvement through more sound cooperation.

What gives Zambia and Africa great cause for concern is, Mr. President, America's policy toward Africa -- or it is the lack of it, which, of course, can mean the same thing.

I have not worked at the UN, but I have been told that at the UN sometimes there are tricks in which an abstention in a vote can be a vote for or against.

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A no-policy position may not be a neutral position indicative of a passive posture, but a deliberate act of policy to support the status quo or to influence events in one direction or the other at a particular time.

We have, in recent years, been most anxious, Mr. President, about the nature and degree of the United States' participation in building conditions for genuine peace, based on human equality, human dignity, freedom and justice for all, for all, particularly in Southern Africa.

You will forgive us, Mr. President, for our candor if we reaffirmed on this occasion our dismay at the fact that America has not fulfilled our expectations. Our dismay arises from a number of factors. We are agreed that peace is central, that peace is central to all human endeavors.

Our struggle for independence was designed to build peace and, thank God, our people have enjoyed internal peace.

We are agreed, Mr. President, that we must help strengthen peace wherever it is threatened. There has been no peace in Southern Africa for a very long time, a very long time, indeed, even if there was no war as such.

The absence of war does not necessarily mean peace. Peace, as you know, Mr. President, dear brothers and sisters, is something much deeper, much deeper than that.

The threat of escalation of violence is now real. It is our duty to avoid such an escalation. We want to build peace in the place of violence, racial harmony in place of disharmony, prosperity in place of economic stagnation, security in place of insecurity, now digging every family every day.

Mr. President, to build genuine peace in Southern Africa, we must recognize with honesty the root causes of the existing conflict.

First, colonialism in Rhodesia and Namibia. The existence of a rebel regime in Rhodesia has since compounded that problem. Second, apartheid and racial domination in South Africa. Over the last few years, a number of catalytic factors have given strength to these forces of evil.

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External economic and strategic interests have flourished colonial and apartheid regimes. Realism and moral conscience dictate that those who believe in peace must join hands in promoting conditions for peace. We cannot declare our commitment to peace and yet strengthen forces which stand in the way of the attainment of that peace.

The era of colonialism has ended. Apartheid cannot endure the test of time. Our obligation is that these evil systems end peacefully, peacefully. To achieve our aim, we need America's total commitment, total commitment to action consistent with that aim.

So far, American policy, let alone action has been low keyed. This has given psychological comfort to the forces of evil.

We become, Mr. President, even more dismayed when the current posture of America toward Africa is set against the background of historical performance in the late fifties and early sixties.

We cannot but recall that America did not wait for and march in step with colonial powers, but rather boldly, boldly marched ahead with the colonial peoples in their struggles to fulfill their aspirations; an America undaunted by the strong forces of reaction against the wind of change, whose nationals helped teach the colonial settlers about the evils of racial discrimination; an America whose Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, "Soapy" Williams, could be slapped in the face by a white reactionary on our soil and yet, undaunted, still smile, still stand by American principles of freedom, justice and national independence based on majority rule.

Yes, the reactionaries hated Americans for spoiling the natives, as they would say, for helping dismantle colonialism.

We ask and wonder what has happened to America. Have the principles changed? The aspirations of the oppressed have not changed at all. In desperation, their anger has exploded their patience. Their resolve to fight, if peaceful negotiations are impossible, is born out by history.

So, their struggle has now received the baptism of fire, victories in Mozambique and Angola have given them added inspiration. Africa has no reason, no reason at all, not to support the liberation movements.

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Can America still end only with declaration of support for the principles of freedom and racial justice? This, I submit, Mr. President, would not be enough. Southern Africa is poised for a dangerous armed conflict. Peace is at stake.

The conflict with disasterous consequences can be averted, but I submit again, Mr. President, there is not much time. Urgent action is required.

At this time, America cannot realistically wait and see what administering powers will do or to pledge to support their efforts when none are in plan. America must head the call of the oppressed.

America, once an apostle in decolonisation, must not be a mere discipline of those which promise but never perform and thus give strength to evils of colonialism and apartheid.

If we want peace, we must end the era of inertia in Rhodesia and Namibia and vigorously work for ending apartheid. America must now be in the vanguard of democratic revolution in Southern Africa.

This is not the first time we make this appeal. It is Africa's constant plea.

Now, Africa has taken an equivocal stand on decolonization. We do not want to fight a war to win freedom and full national independence in Southern Africa. Africa wants to achieve these objectives by peaceful means; that is, through negotiations.

Our declaration to give high priority to peaceful methods to resolve the current crisis is a conscious decision, a conscious decision. We feel it to be our moral duty to avoid bloodshed where we can.

We are determined to fulfill this obligation, but, Mr. President, not at any price, not at any price, not at the price of freedom and justice. There we say no, no.

Africa has made it clear that if the road to peaceful change is closed by the stone walls of racial bigotry and force of arms by minority regimes, then we are equally duty-bound to take the inescapable alternative.

The oppressed people have a right to answer force with force, and Africa and all her friends in the world will support them.

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Liberation movements fought fascist Portugal. We supported them. They won. Now we must turn to Rhodesia and Namibia.

Can America stand and be counted in implementing the Dar es Salaam strategy adopted by Africa? In Dar es Salaam early this month, Mr. President, Africa reaffirmed its commitment, its commitment to a peaceful solution to the crisis in Southern Africa as a first priority.

Our strategy opens new doors, even now new doors to peaceful change if those caught up in the crisis seek honorable exit. Here is a chance in a century to achieve peace based on human equality and human dignity without further violence.

We call upon America to support our efforts in achieving majority rule in Rhodesia and Namibia immediately, and the ending of apartheid in South Africa. If we are committed to peace, then let us join hands in building peace by removing factors underlying the current crisis.

If the oppressed peoples fail to achieve these noble ends by peaceful means, we call upon America not to give any support to the oppressors. Even now we call upon America to desist from direct and indirect support to minority regimes, for this puts America in direct conflict with the interests of Africa; that is, peace deeply rooted, deeply rooted in human dignity and equality and freedom without discrimination.

We have recently demonstrated, Mr. President, our readiness to make peaceful change possible in Mozambique and Angola. We are equally committed to assist the oppressed if they should convince us that the road to peaceful change is closed and armed struggle is the only alternative.

The rebels in Rhodesia, assisted by South African troops, have committed some of the worst atrocities on the continent. Africa cannot allow them to continue, and we urge America not to allow them to continue.

Victory for the majority is a matter of time, a matter of time. Let us, therefore, make it as painless as possible to those who have dominated their fellow men for years.

Mr. President, we wish America, we wish America to understand our aims and objectives. We are not fighting whites, we are fighting an evil and brutal system. On this there must be no compromise, none at all.

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America should also understand our strategy. We want to achieve our objectives by peaceful methods first and foremost. Africa is ready to try this approach with patience and exhaust all possible tactics, for peace is too precious, is too precious for all of us, but our patience and the patience of the oppressed has its limits.

Mr. President, we are here only for a short time. We have no other mission except to take the opportunity of the visit to put Africa's stand clearly. We want to avoid confrontation, but let us not be pushed.

Once again, Mr. President, on behalf of my wife and my compatriots, and indeed on my own behalf, I thank you, Mrs. Ford, and our colleagues, brothers and sisters, for this warm welcome and hospitality.

This is indeed a memorable visit, memorable because it has been fruitful, and it coincides with the launching only yesterday of your bicentenary celebrations. We congratulate the people of the United States for their tremendous achievements since independence, which have justified the anti-colonialist struggle of their founding fathers.

Finally, I take the opportunity of inviting you, Mr. President, and Mrs. Ford, to pay a visit to Zambia. We will be happy to receive you in our country at any time convenient to you.

And may I say, sir, at that time I might answer the challenge of playing golf. (Laughter)

I now invite you, ladies and gentlemen, to join me and my wife and my colleagues in this toast to the President and Mrs. Ford.

Mr. President, Mrs. Ford -- bilateral relations.

END (AT 10:34 P.M. EDT)