

DISCUSSION WITH RUFUS S. SCHUBERT ON FRENCH ISLAND ON APRIL 3, 1964

- (1) I told him that I had been interviewing people in OT in connection with the events of March/April 1960. It was a fantastic story, I said, and I hoped that some day he would be able to read my notes on what happened behind the scenes. I referred to the extraordinary role which the Liberals had played at that time. He said, Yes, his men had told him what happened. In fact, his men had said that they were so impressed by what the Liberals did, that they would have been willing to accept the amalgamation of the PAC and the Liberal Party, had the situation arisen.
- (2) During our discussion, the question of the future of South Africa came up. We talked about the Randstars and he said that the trouble was that for all these years, the Nationalists had been drawing into their people the idea of keeping down the Africans. Now, with the Randstars, this idea was supposed to be changing. But it was impossible to change the attitudes of people overnight, and this was the problem which Vorwoerd was facing with his own people. I pointed out to him that this was the sort of discussion that he and I had often had in the old days before 1960. I reminded him that we had talked in exactly the same way about African Nationalism with my pointing out to him, that although I could see the purpose for reasons of expediency for building up Black Nationalism, this would lead to anti-Whitism, and when Africans eventually won the day, it would be impossible to change their attitude to Whites overnight. His argument, I reminded him again, had always been that it would be possible, when victory came, to get Africans to accept Whites as equals overnight. In view of what he had just said about Vorwoerd, had his views changed, I asked. I added that in 1960, PAC had accepted Coloureds as members, but not Whites or Indians. He said he remembered our discussion, but the fact was that circumstances had changed since then. A number of Whites had given clear proof of their willingness to work as equals with Africans in a completely disinterested spirit. One example, he said, was that of the Liberals in OT. He agreed with me that they had not attempted to seize control of the PAC campaign, but had merely given full assistance as requested. Another example was that of Patrick Duncan. By joining the PAC he stood to gain nothing in the foreseeable future, while he had in fact lost a great deal. Thus the actions of these Whites made it possible to accept them fully within the PAC. He added that if the PAC were to be reformed, now, it would in his view, be on a wholly non-racial basis.
- (3) I mentioned that when I went to Sautoland I would be going to see P.W. Leballo. Personally, I thought Leballo was a dangerous man and I did not intend attending for any nonsense from him. From his attitude I gathered that he was not altogether happy himself about Leballo. He said that his wife had told him that when she saw Leballo last year, Leballo had ranted and raved against me (I did not ask why) but presumed that it flows from his attitude towards the press with which I am associated.)

(3) etc....

Mrs. Sobukwe had told Leballo that I was her "best friend", and Leballo had then toned down his remarks. I told Sobukwe that I had been disgusted with Leballo's statement, issued in the PAC Bulletin in Durban in April or May last year, in which he spoke about the need to murder white women and babies. Sobukwe said that others had also complained to him about the statement, including Solby Ngwenane (PAC executive member now in jail). I asked whether it was true that Leballo had been in a mental institution at one stage. Sobukwe said it was not true, it was a story deliberately circulated by the left, by Nkomo. He said that Leballo was basically a sound person, but his trouble was that he was publicity-hungry. He (Sobukwe) had had considerable influence over him and had succeeded through his association with him in toning Leballo quite considerably. Had he had another year with Leballo, he felt the man would have been a very different person. I asked whether it was true that Leballo had led a motley of soldiers at the end of the war, for which he had been court-martialled. Sobukwe smiled and said: "That is what Leballo says, I don't know".

(4) I mentioned to Sobukwe that among the books I had brought him that day was a memorial album devoted to John Kennedy. He said he was happy that I had brought this, as he was a great admirer of Kennedy. He had heard the news of the assassination the day after it happened (he heard it on the radio) and he had been stunned by it. He could not believe that it had happened. He said that he admired Kennedy's courage, and above all, his fair-mindedness to his enemies. I said: "Well, I hope you will remember that in the future," and we both laughed.

(5) His physical condition remains good. About a week and a half before he had had a medical check-up and everything was found to be O.K. He still, though, has aches in his one shoulder and in his back. He is being well looked after - there is no doubt about it. His mental state: he is alert and his personality remains intact. He told me that his University of London studies were going reasonably well, but he was having extremely great difficulty in concentrating, because of his preoccupation with his detention. In his essays, he was receiving marks of about six out of ten. He felt that when he went through his studies he knew what they meant, but because of his isolation, he was not certain to what extent he was really absorbing the material. In an effort to cut down the length of his day, he was now trying to stay in bed an hour longer in the mornings and was getting up at 7 a.m. or 7.30 a.m. He had coffee for breakfast and either studied or read, and then listened every morning at 10 a.m. to the religious broadcast on the radio. I asked him in which language he listened and he replied laughingly: "Only to the English. I suppose I am a spoiled native". He spent the rest of the day reading or studying, except for listening to one or two news broadcasts and to the "No Place to Hide" serial on the radio at 7.15 p.m. He went to bed at about 10.30 or 11 p.m. He said he slept soundly and had no difficulty in getting to sleep.

(5) Contd.

Apart from the wardens who were immediately responsible for him, there was great hostility towards him by the other wardens. He saw this when they walked past his enclosure. They did not however have anything to do with him.

(6) When I saw him the previous time - that is, the Wednesday of the previous week, he asked me to get him various articles of clothing. I had to cross him to accept clothing. He gave me a list of bare essentials and I had to question him to find out exactly what he was in need of. On my second visit I delivered all the clothing, plus a record-player, plus books. On the second visit, he also asked for some winter sheets and said he might need blankets but would let me know about this. I arranged for a parcel of fresh fruit to be delivered to him every week from CW, and also for cigarettes, tobacco and cigars every month. I have also arranged, after finding out from him that he only had an upright chair on which to sit, to deliver a deck chair to him.

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