

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

5/1/89

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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C.F.

May 1, 1989

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CO141

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: BRENT SCOWCROFT *B*

SUBJECT: Letter from the President to Chief Buthelezi in South Africa

Purpose

To respond to a letter from Chief Buthelezi in South Africa.

Background

Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi recently wrote to you, discussing the situation in South Africa and future events in that country, and suggesting that you meet with him. I agree with the Department of State's recommendation that you respond directly to Buthelezi, an important black leader, but refrain from specifics concerning a meeting or U.S. policy toward South Africa.

Recommendation

That you sign the attached letter to Buthelezi.

Attachment

- Tab A Proposed Letter to Chief Buthelezi
- Tab B Incoming Letter from Chief Buthelezi

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Declassify on: OADR

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

DECLASSIFIED

PER NSC WAIVER #2021-02

By MM NARA, Date 7/16/2021

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 1, 1989

Dear Chief Buthelezi:

Thank you for the kind words of congratulation conveyed in your recent letter. I well remember our previous meetings and the vision of a peaceful, nonracist South Africa that you articulated on these occasions. It is my sincere hope that during my Administration that vision will be brought closer to realization. I assure you that the United States will continue to do everything it can to assist all those South Africans who are working to hasten the demise of apartheid and the establishment of a just, democratic order.

I wish you much success in your endeavors on behalf of your people and look forward to our remaining in touch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "G. Bush".

Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi
Chief Minister of Kwazulu
Ulundi, Republic of South Africa

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NSC/S PROFILE

RECORD ID: 8902268
RECEIVED: 01 APR 89 14

TO: BUTHELEZI, MANGOSUTH

FROM: PRESIDENT

DOC DATE: 01 MAY 89
SOURCE REF:

KEYWORDS: SOUTH AFRICA TERRORISM
 ECONOMICS

PERSONS: BUTHELEZI, MANGOSUTHU G

SUBJECT: LTR TO PRES FM CHIEF BUTHELEZI RE FUTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA

ACTION: PRES SGD LTR DUE DATE: 05 APR 89 STATUS: C

STAFF OFFICER: CABELLY LOGREF:

FILES: WH NSCIF: CODES:

D O C U M E N T D I S T R I B U T I O N

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO
BLACKWILL
CABELLY
DEAL
MILLER
PORTER
WORKING

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines
E.O. 13526, SEC 3.4 (b), September 11, 2006
By mm NARA, Date 1/27/2022

COMMENTS: _____

DISPATCHED BY _____ DATE _____ BY HAND W/ATTCH

OPENED BY: NSDGR CLOSED BY: NSMDC DOC 3 OF 3

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

2268

April 4, 1989

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR BRENT SCOWCROFT

THROUGH: DAVID C. MILLER *DM*

FROM: ROBERT J. CABELLY *RJC*

SUBJECT: Letter from the President to Chief Buthelezi in South Africa

Attached at Tab A is a draft letter from the President to Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the leader of the Zulus in South Africa. The Chief wrote to the President, making several unclear points on events in South Africa and seeking a meeting with the President. We agree with the Department of State's recommendation, attached at Tab II, that the President respond directly to Buthelezi, but that his letter make no promises regarding a meeting.

More importantly regarding U.S. policy toward South Africa, we concur with State's view that the President should consider a meeting with Buthelezi at some point in the future, which could be juxtaposed with other meetings with credible black leaders and South African whites.

Tim Deal and Rich Porter concur. *TD*

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the memo to the President attached at Tab I.

Approve ✓ Disapprove _____

Attachments

- Tab I Memo to the President
- Tab A Proposed Letter to Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi
- Tab II Incoming Correspondence

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Declassify on: OADR

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PER NSC WAIVER #2021-02
By MM NARA, Date 7/16/2021

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March 31, 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR BRENT SCOWCROFT
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Letter to Chief Buthelezi from South Africa

Chief Mangosuthu G. Buthelezi of Kwazulu, leader of the largest black ethnic group in South Africa, has written to the President (attachment 2) congratulating him on his election and expounding, in a somewhat disjointed fashion, on the future of South Africa, including concern about the "growing propensities toward terrorism", and the failure of revolutionaries in neighboring countries to address their people's real problems. The letter closes with a proposal for a meeting with the President at some unspecified time.

President Reagan met with Chief Buthelezi at the White House in 1982 and 1986. As the nominal leader of 6,000,000 Zulus, Buthelezi remains a political force to be reckoned with. He strongly opposes economic sanctions and denounces violent resistance as futile and counter-productive. While concluding that he is more likely to erode apartheid by working "within the system", Buthelezi has stuck to a set of preconditions -- including release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners -- for joining a SAG-sponsored "national council" and has resisted many SAG blandishments to join a sham negotiating process. Nevertheless, Buthelezi remains a very controversial personality in South Africa -- and in this country. Because of his willingness to continue to try to work within the system and to give the white leadership the benefit of the doubt about the sincerity of their reform efforts, he is anathema to the mainstream black opposition.

We recommend that the President reply directly to Buthelezi. The proposed reply (attachment 1) recalls the President's previous meetings with Buthelezi and affirms the President's intention to work for the early abolition of apartheid. While it makes no commitments with respect to future meetings, one should be considered in the near future, along with meetings with other, more orthodox black South African leaders.

Melvyn Levitsky
for Melvyn Levitsky
Executive Secretary

Attachments:

- 1) Draft letter to Buthelezi
- 2) Letter from Buthelezi

DECLASSIFIED

PER DOS WAIVER, November 6, 2015

By mm NARA, Date 1/27/2022~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECL: OADR

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
SUGGESTED DRAFT

Dear Chief Buthelezi:

Thank you for the kind words of congratulation conveyed in your recent letter. I well remember our previous meetings and the vision of a peaceful, nonracial South Africa that you articulated on those occasions. It is my sincere hope that during my administration that vision will be brought closer to realization. I assure you that the United States will continue to do everything it can to assist all those South Africans who are working to hasten the demise of apartheid and the establishment of a just, democratic order.

I wish you much success in your endeavors on behalf of your people and look forward to our remaining in touch.

Sincerely,

George Bush

Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi,
Chief Minister of Kwazulu,
Ulundi, Republic of South Africa.