



(At this point, the photographer entered to take pictures)

Secretary: I understand you are electioneering yourself.

Prime Minister: Yes, Parliament must be dissolved May 22. Then we have three months before the election in August.

Secretary: Do you start campaigning now?

Prime Minister: We have already started.

Secretary: It said in my briefing notes that you were going right back to campaign. My people tell me you were sure to win.

Ambassador: That's why the Prime Minister couldn't stay on in the States.

Secretary: We hope you will come to Washington as soon as your schedule permits.

Ambassador: She had hoped to go to Philadelphia for a speaking engagement and on to Canada.

Secretary: Were you in the U.S. before?

Prime Minister: In 1971.

Secretary: Was that for the UN?

Ambassador: She also went to Washington and met President Nixon.

Secretary: Did we meet?

Ambassador: No, you were away on a trip. General Haig met the the Prime Minister.

Secretary: When I speak, I have a problem that I don't stop to take a drink of water. Also, two weeks of traveling in Africa makes you lose your voice. Have you been in Africa?

Prime Minister: I was in Zambia for the previous Non-Aligned Conference.

Secretary: That's a nice place. I like Kaunda.

Prime Minister: I hope you can succeed.

Secretary: There is a possibility. There is much jostling for power, but people are talking and I think we will wind up with a settlement in Rhodesia. Then we will have to decide what to do about Namibia. We have already gotten Nujoma 85 percent of what he wants. The question is whether he will be satisfied with that or wait another ten years.

Prime Minister: But the South Africans won't talk with him.

Secretary: No, but they will send someone to a conference in Geneva if it is convened and he will be made available for talks.

Ambassador: It is a matter of prestige for South Africa.

Secretary: The problem is that Vorster said he would not talk to a gang of murderers but if we can get them together in Geneva, six months later I assure you they will be talking. It shouldn't be difficult to find a way to get them together in Geneva if the South Africans make someone available while the others are there. The trouble is that some of the African leaders have no experience in politics. Instead of seeing where the trend is going, all they know how to do is to fight. They worry a great deal about their colleagues.

Ambassador: Is the question coming up in the Security Council?

Scranton: Yes, it is on and there is talk there will be a meeting in October. Incidentally, Nujoma was enthusiastic about your speech.

Secretary: Was he enthusiastic to the press?

Scranton: I don't know.

Secretary: You have a great meeting with Africans and then they go out and say the opposite to the press. I had a great meeting with Nujoma.

Ambassador: Did you meet with Kaunda and Nyerere?

Secretary: Yes, you saw them both. Didn't you?

Prime Minister: Nyerere couldn't come to the summit.

Secretary: We have excellent relations with Kaunda. He is a 100 percent supporter of our efforts. Nyerere is concerned about his position with Mozambique. He supports us but uses anti-western rhetoric to protect his flank. I have no idea about Angola.

Prime Minister: Neto came to the summit. He seems all right.

Secretary: Is he as dynamic as Machel?

Ambassador: No, not as dynamic.

Secretary: I want to say how very impressed we were with your handling of the Non-aligned summit. It was a very difficult position and you did very well. Frankly, after your speech, I was going to write you a letter but then said let's wait. The Vietnamese were pretty moderate.

Prime Minister: Yes, this was a striking feature. The Koreans were awful. Both sides. Maybe that's just the way they are.

Secretary: How do you define Non-aligned? How does Cuba get in? I have never understood that.

Prime Minister: They were there from the beginning.

Ambassador: As the Prime Minister said this morning, the Non-aligned are not concerned about a country's internal system as long as the country is not tied up in an alliance.

Secretary: Without going into the mechanics of the Non-aligned, I thought that the Conference was managed in a very decent and fair way.

Prime Minister: The Cubans were not very active.

Ambassador: Except for Puerto Rico.

Secretary: It is hard to see sometimes how decisions are made at conferences. For example, our proposal for the UNCTAD meeting in Nairobi came up at a time when our supporters had gone to bed. Of the 150 countries participating, only 50 voted and we lost by 2 votes. The opposition were better organized at the meeting and we made some mistakes.

Ambassador: In the Non-aligned there are no votes, only a consensus.

Secretary: Yes, but you have reservations. We appreciate Sri Lanka's reservations. Neville was good enough to come before the meeting. I told him where our boiling point was low.

Ambassador: Even on the Middle East, the resolution was not as extreme as at Lima.

Secretary: When is the next summit?

Ambassador: Havana three years from now.

Secretary: When will the foreign ministers meet?

Prime Minister: Next year but I am not sure where.

Secretary: I told my friends in the Arab League meeting they would have me at their next meeting as an observer.

Prime Minister: Did they agree?

Secretary: The Arabs are always extremely polite and they haven't said no.

(Laughter)

Prime Minister: The situation in Lebanon is terrible.

(Waiter brings in tea and sandwiches)

Ambassador: Do you prefer tea or coffee?

Secretary: Actually, I lean more to tea. Previously Neville and other Ceylonese used to keep me supplied. Now that I am Secretary of State he doesn't. I had very good students from Sri Lanka. They gave me plenty of tea.

Ambassador: I have plenty of tea but I don't want to get into trouble by sending it to the Secretary. As the Prime Minister mentioned in her talk, our biggest problem comes from falling tea prices. That is why we want a commodity agreement.

Secretary: What is your view on the Indian Ocean? I know about your proposal but how do you view developments in the region?

[REDACTED]

Prime Minister: At the present time India and Bangladesh are fighting about Farakka. It is on the agenda here. We have good relations with India and have settled our problems.

Secretary: You are the only neighbor who has.

Ambassador: We are too small to do otherwise. We also have good relations with Pakistan.

Prime Minister: They are our biggest tea buyer; since they lost their tea in East Pakistan, they have shifted to us.

Secretary: Bangladesh also produces tea?

Prime Minister: Maybe they will start buying some from Bangladesh now, but they have become accustomed to ours.

Ambassador: Bangladesh seems to be serious about the Farakka problem.

Secretary: Do you have a solution? I would love to hear one.

Prime Minister: The irrigation group went to Delhi but nothing seemed to happen.

Ambassador: Bangladesh says it is prepared to call in third party assistance but India won't. It wants it handled bi-laterally.

Secretary: It is a political matter. India is trying to influence Bangladesh politics.

Prime Minister: But the Indians say they have been building the barrage for 15 years. They had an agreement with Mujib to use the barrage for one year and to see what the effect was. But the present regime in Bangladesh didn't agree. I spoke about this with Chavan.

Secretary: I will see him next week. Their Ambassador Kaul is leaving.

Ambassador: Yes, Kewal Singh is coming to replace him.

Prime Minister: He is a good man. He was very understanding with our problems. He and Swaran Singh made a good pair.

Secretary: Yes, I was impressed with them.

Prime Minister: Swaran Singh was very helpful. He was very keen to find solutions. He was foreign minister for a long while.

Secretary: I gather he is not doing anything now.

Prime Minister: He held a number of other jobs over the years too, in addition to being Defense Minister and Foreign Minister.

Ambassador: Do you see the possibility of some settlement of the Korean question now that the item has been withdrawn from the UN agenda?

Secretary: If the North Koreans handle this like the German question, there could be a solution. Both countries could be recognized. But North Korea is trying to get bilateral talks started with us. They say these will be secret but then they will announce them publicly as soon as they start. We have maintained that we will talk with the South Koreans present or alone if the Russians or the Chinese were to talk with the South Koreans. We couldn't let North Korea isolate South Korea. We have no interest in a preferential U.S. position in Korea. If the North Koreans took a reasonable stand this would be a solvable problem. There is no demand in the U.S. to stay in Korea.

Secretary: I have to hurry back to Washington in order to greet the French.

Prime Minister: I would like to thank you and your government for all the help you have given Sri Lanka, especially two years ago when we were trying to get an aid group to meet and the British were opposed to this. You were of help. We also appreciate your PL 480 assistance. As you know, we have had very bad weather in the last couple of years.

Secretary: Is that unusual?

Prime Minister: The southwest monsoon failed and we had the worst drought since 1906. We have had to import drinking water pumps. The main problem has been that six rice crops failed in a row because of drought.

Secretary: Do you think there is a permanent change in the weather?

Prime Minister: I think so.

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Secretary: I told Callaghan that if they have one more year like this, I will send them a camel. Now that they have oil, England will be like an Arab country. Will this badly affect your economy?

Prime Minister: Yes, the people are in very bad shape. It costs us a lot of foreign exchange. U.S. PL 480 assistance was very useful.

Mr. Atherton: Mr. Secretary, I haven't had an opportunity to brief you yet, but we are hopeful of being able to provide additional PL 480 assistance for Sri Lanka. They have asked for an additional 100,000 tons of wheat flour.

Secretary: I want to assure you that our attitude will be to be helpful. Consider that you have an open invitation to Washington. You tell us when your schedule permits.

Prime Minister: One reason I was concerned about coming now was your election.

Secretary: The polls are looking good now. I was just over at Time and they told me their latest poll is looking very good.

Scranton: By all the books, after six bad years you have only one more to go, then you can expect seven good ones.

Ambassador: As the Prime Minister said this morning, we have had to pay for the social progress we have made, the reduction in the population growth rate to 1.6 percent and the increase in our life expectancy to 67 years has cost us a lot of money. That is where the aid is very helpful.

(As the group gets up to leave)

Scranton: I much enjoyed the Prime Minister's excellent speech this morning. It was a very good address.

Prime Minister: Thank you.

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