

# Institute for Pastoral Education

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21 hours, 1992 May 14.

The Chairperson  
Management Committee  
CODESA  
Kempton Park

Dear Chairperson,

## CONDUCT OF PUBLIC OFFICIAL: FOREIGN MINISTER R.F. BOTHA.

I write to draw your urgent attention to what I consider to be improper use of a state office and occasion for party political interests. I refer to Foreign Minister Pik Botha's briefing featured in tonight's eight o'clock T.V. news, of foreign representatives.

I write in two capacities:

- \* As director of a pastoral institute which is concerned with the pastoral implications of social developments.
  - \* As a responsible citizen of this country.
- I consider the last-mentioned capacity as the fundamental and most important one.

A briefing of foreign representatives by a Minister of State for Foreign Affairs is a solemn event which should represent South Africa, not a party position. In his briefing Mr Botha presented the National Party proposals presented to Working Group Two of CODESA. He went on to motivate them, and used the opportunity to interpret the ANC's proposals of decision making by the standard two-thirds majority as characteristic of their commitment to central power because of their marxist inclinations.

I consider it objectionable and irresponsible of such a senior member of the government to do this at the very moment and time when the Working Group is locked in discussions over the very issues. It is reprehensible that he should do this on the particular evening when all South Africans who are committed to the success of negotiations for justice and peace, are earnestly praying for a just resolution of the deadlock.



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We know that Mr Botha has recently been elected Transvaal leader of the National Party, and that he may have electioneering reasons for being aggressively partisan. However, as a Minister of State, speaking strictly in that capacity at a briefing of foreign representatives, he has no justification to speak in the language of a "Transvaal Nasionale Party Leier" - admittedly, a very important and powerful position in the South African politics of the not too distant past.

Looking at the dignified and balanced manner in which the chairperson of the CODESA Management Committee presented himself as a state official between the two well-mannered partisans in agenda, I thought Mr Botha has an example to learn from.

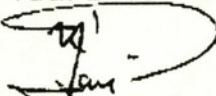
I request that the Management Committee takes this matter up in the code of discipline of public officials. If this is not addressed, we shall have it happen again, as it always has, that government officials, including departmental functionaries, the army and the police, fail to distinguish between their roles as officials of the public and those of the parties they privately belong to; between their personal and sometimes household interests and those of the state.

If these practices are not rooted out at the highest level, then we can expect serious problems with the levelling of the political field in the interim period. In fact we shall have a situation where the South African public can helplessly witness every right wing soldier, police officer, or departmental official, for instance, presuming justification in abusing their office to promote their political designs, to varying degrees of violence and public harm.

If CODESA cannot stop this, Morena boloka sechaba sa hesu!

Thank you for your time.

Yours for a democratic future.



Revd M. Malusi Mpumliwana.

c.c. Media.