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LETTER DATED 6 MAY 1982 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OF SEYCHELLES
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour, upon instructions from my Government to append a copy of an article published in "The New York Times" of Tuesday, 4 May 1982.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this article as a document of the Security Council under the item "Complaint by Seychelles".

(Signed) Giovinella GONTHIER
Chargé d'Affaires

Annex

THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, MAY 4, 1982

TESTIMONY LINKS SOUTH AFRICAN ARMS TO COUP

Johannesburg, May 3 (AP) - Col. Michael Hoare, the mercenary leader of the bungled Seychelles coup attempt, testified Monday that the South African Government had approved the attempted takeover and supplied the weapons, South African television reported.

Colonel Hoare, testifying in his own defense, made the statement at the trial in Pietermaritzburg of 43 mercenaries accused of hijacking an Air India jetliner to escape from the Indian Ocean island last Nov. 25 when the coup failed. They were arrested after the plane touched down in Durban, South Africa.

Last December, Prime Minister P.W. Botha of South Africa denied charges by Seychelles leaders that his Government was involved in the plot or knew of it in advance.

The 63-year-old mercenary submitted as evidence an invoice, purportedly from the South African Defense Force certifying the delivery to his home of weapons and ammunition to be used in the coup.

Arms Supply Listed

Colonel Hoare said that among the items were 75 Soviet-made AK-47 assault rifles, nearly 24,000 rounds of ammunition, 40 hand grenades, 10 rocket launchers and 100 rockets, the South African Broadcasting Corporation reported from Pietermaritzburg, about 280 miles southeast of here.

Colonel Hoare said he was told that Mr. Botha's Cabinet had decided in principle last September that the coup should go ahead.

The plan was aimed at toppling the socialist Government of President France Albert René of the Seychelles, but was uncovered at Mahé Airport when a customs official found arms in one of the mercenaries' luggage. The men then allegedly hijacked the Air India plane and forced the pilot to fly to South Africa.

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Colonel Hoare testified that he was approached in September 1977, by a former minister of the previous Seychelles Government of James Mancham, who had been ousted by Mr. René in a coup, about the possibility of a countercoup.

Cost Estimate for a Coup

The cost was estimated by the mercenary leader at \$5 million, but the insurgents could not come up with more than \$500,000, he said. Colonel Hoare said he finally agreed to a price of \$400,000.

Saying he was making the disclosure reluctantly, Colonel Hoare asserted the bungled coup was carried out with the knowledge of the South Africa's National Intelligence Service.

One of the seven mercenaries captured in the Seychelles and awaiting trial there has identified himself as an agent for the intelligence service. However, officials in Pretoria said the man, Martin Dolincheck, was no longer on the payroll.

Colonel Hoare said he was summoned to the South African capital before the coup attempt by a senior member of the intelligence service, known to him only as "Mr. Claasens," who promised him the support of the South African military.

Plot Canceled, Then Revived

He said Mr. Claasens phoned him at one point to say that Mr. Botha had ordered the plot abandoned. But Colonel Hoare said an army officer told him at a subsequent meeting that the Cabinet had given the go-ahead and "we must now discuss the details."

The mercenary, who is known for his exploits in the Congo during the 1960's said he and Mr. Claasens later met with two South African officers, whom he identified as a Brigadier Hamman and a Brigadier Knoetze in Pretoria. The two officers agreed that the South African military would supply arms, ammunition and radios, Colonel Hoare said.

Colonel Hoare said it was decided that Soviet weapons would be used so the coup could not be traced to South Africa.

He added that the material was later delivered to his home in Hilton, near Pietermaritzburg, where he signed a receipt and was given the invoice that he produced as evidence.
