

High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood

Chester A. Crocker

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Chester A. Crocker : High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Doing the Right Thing at the Wrong Time By Thomas Mitchell "High Noon in Southern Africa" is the story of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker's efforts to negotiate a Cuban withdrawal from Angola and a South African withdrawal from Namibia during the Reagan Administration. The effort took almost eight years, making him the longest serving Assistant Sec'y for African Affairs. During the middle his efforts were complicated by the drive for economic sanctions against Pretoria over its apartheid policy. South Africa was a hot button issue for American politics in the 1980s: conservatives saw Pretoria as a loyal ally in the fight against Soviet expansionism and Marxism; liberals saw Pretoria as a major violator of human rights and an embarrassment to the West. The United Nations had revoked Pretoria's League of Nations mandate to administer Namibia--dating back to 1920--in the 1960s and Pretoria occupied Namibia in defiance of the UN. Crocker decided that Pretoria could be compelled to withdraw only by neutralizing the Cuban threat in Angola. His efforts were complicated by the ongoing Angolan civil war with South Africa supporting rebel leader Jonas Savimbi and UNITA against the ruling MPLA regime. The book is the story of how he overcame all of these obstacles. This book

should be required reading for all diplomats dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Long Winded By Lee Jordan Not exactly a page turner, but it does provide a detailed account of events during the 80's in Angola and Namibia, albeit a very one sided view. I used this for graduate research, so it was very effective for that purpose. I would not recommend it for casual reading. 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Proof that a strategy can actually work. By A Customer Dr. Crocker's lucid account of his eight-plus years as U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs offers valuable insight into the complex world of foreign policymaking and diplomacy. His central achievement--and the focus of this book--is the Namibia-Angola peace process, an arduous series of events involving pariah states (Cuba and apartheid-era South Africa), guerrilla movements, ideologues and political opportunism. Crocker swam among these sharks for nearly a decade in order to produce the December 1988 agreements signed by Angola, Cuba and South Africa that resulted in the creation of an independent Namibia and the withdrawal of foreign forces from Namibia and Angola. Crocker's memoir is a rich history of a transformative era in southern Africa, but it also contains two valuable lessons for today's policymakers. First, a well-designed long-run strategy can work if pursued consistently and vigorously. Crocker outlined the bargain behind the 1988 agreements as early as 1981: Cuban troops exit Angola, South Africans end support for Angolan rebels, independent Namibia created. Although this strategy took nearly a decade to come to fruition, its logic and the diplomacy behind it never wavered. With today's policymakers treating six months as long-term, this persistence was amazing. The second lesson that Crocker brings out is the particular importance of regional dynamics in Africa. Perhaps more than any area outside of the Balkans, African conflicts readily spill over borders and inflame neighboring countries. One need look no further than today's Congo to see that this is still the case. Crocker demonstrated that it is possible to get all the relevant players involved without losing control of the process, if the strategy is sound and well-implemented. This regional dynamic can also work in a positive direction, as the increased stability in Angola, Namibia and Mozambique provided South Africa with a less-threatening external environment in which to dismantle apartheid. Crocker makes all of these points in his compelling and readable book. Highly recommended.

During the 1980s, a wave of strife threatened to engulf the nations of Southern Africa. Chester Crocker embarked on an eight-year diplomatic marathon to bring peace to the truculent neighbours. Despite all the obstacles to resolving the complex conflict, the Crocker strategy worked. This narrative tells how peace (almost) came to Angola and why South Africa let Namibia have its independence. This book is aimed at professional diplomats and lay readers alike.

From Publishers Weekly As U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs from 1981 to 1989, Crocker waged a diplomatic struggle that led to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Soviet-backed Angola and the end of apartheid in an independent Namibia freed from South Africa's control. But his assertion in this lengthy diplomatic history that the Reagan administration brought regional security to southern Africa, scoring a foreign-policy victory, rings hollow. He defends U.S. covert intervention on behalf of Angola's anti-communist mercenary rebels who, with financial help from South Africa's apartheid regime, devastated much of the Angolan economy, slaughtered innocent civilians, displaced 600,000 persons, caused widespread hunger and destroyed at least half of Angola's hospitals and clinics. Likewise, in Mozambique, the South African-financed mercenaries ravaged the country and economy. Notwithstanding Crocker's pointed insistence that America's "constructive engagement" was a regional strategy, not a cozy alliance with apartheid, critics may find gaping holes in the diplomatic record. Photos. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal These memoirs from an Assistant Secretary of State of African Affairs during the Reagan administration are a welcome insight into the complex negotiations and justifications that the administration maintained in dealing with major foreign policy issues: U.S. sanctions against South Africa, military support for rebels in Angola, and the independence of Namibia. Crocker describes his role and that of the United States as one of peacekeeping among regional warring parties and provides elaborate details of the diplomatic craft involved. But for millions of people in southern Africa, the United States was seen as actively contributing to the violence and deadlock. Thus, the book is important as an account from within the foreign policy establishment, although subsequent analyses are likely to take exception to many of Crocker's views. Recommended for large libraries with African and foreign relations collections.- Bill Rau, Takoma Park, Md. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.