

FOLUS 037/01

ZZ LUSAKA

GRS 300  
CONFIDENTIAL  
FM FCO 012019Z JUL 79  
TO FLASH LUSAKA  
TELNO 602 OF 1 AUGUST  
INFO IMMEDIATE PRETORIA, UKMIS NEW YORK,  
PRIORITY WASHINGTON, LAGOS, MODUK (DS 11, DS 13 S.SMITH).

MIPT: PLESSEY CONTRACT.

FOLLOWING IS PROPOSED LINE FOR NEWS DEPARTMENT TO USE IN  
ANSWER TO ENQUIRIES.

ON THE RECORD: IT IS NOT OUR CUSTOM TO COMMENT ON INDIVIDUAL  
LICENCE APPLICATIONS. HOWEVER, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE ORIGINAL  
LICENCE WAS GRANTED TO PLESSEY LTD BY THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION  
BEFORE THE UN MANDATORY ARMS EMBARGO FOR THE EXPORT TO SOUTH  
AFRICA OF AN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL RADAR SYSTEM WHICH WAS UNDER  
-STOOD TO BE FOR THE USE IN PEACETIME FOR THE CONTROL OF CIVIL  
AIR TRAFFIC. WE ARE SATISFIED THAT THE PLESSEY CONTRACT DOES NOT  
CONTRAVENE OUR INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE UN ARMS EMBARGO  
OR OUR DOMESTIC LEGISLATION TO GIVE EFFECT TO THIS. SINCE THE  
ABROGATION OF THE SIMONSTOWN NAVAL BASE AGREEMENT IN JUNE 1975 IT  
HAS BEEN BRITISH GOVERNMENT POLICY THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO  
COLLABORATION WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IN DEFENCE MATTERS.

IF PRESSED ON ALLEGED PRESENCE IN THIS COUNTRY OF SADF PERSONNEL:  
WE UNDERSTAND, AS IS NORMAL WITH SUCH CONTRACTS, THAT THERE IS  
PROVISION FOR TRAINING IN THIS COUNTRY ON THE EQUIPMENT TO BE  
SUPPLIED. WE ARE LOOKING INTO THIS MATTER. IF PRESSED FURTHER: WE  
UNDERSTAND THAT THE CONTROL CENTRE WHERE THE PLESSEY SYSTEM IS  
INSTALLED HANDLES BOTH CIVIL AND MILITARY AIR TRAFFIC.

TO BE STRESSED UNATTRIBUTABLY.

THIS IS A PURELY COMMERCIAL CONTRACT AND THE PRESENT BRITISH  
GOVERNMENT HAVE THEREFORE HAD NO OCCASION TO CONSIDER IT OR ITS  
IMPLICATIONS.

CARRINGTON

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FOLUS 038/01

ZZ LUSAKA

GRS 33  
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FM FCO 012018Z AUG 79

TO FLASH LUSAKA

TELEGRAM NUMBER 601 OF 1 AUGUST 1979

MIPT : PLESSEY CONTRACT.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF OPERATIVE PARAGRAPHS OF SECURITY COUNCIL  
RESOLUTION 418(77)

1. DETERMINES, HAVING REGARD TO THE POLICIES AND ACTS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT, THAT THE ACQUISITION BY SOUTH AFRICA OF ARMS AND RELATED MATERIAL CONSTITUTES A THREAT TO THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY:
2. DECIDES THAT ALL STATES SHALL CEASE FORTHWITH ANY PROVISION TO SOUTH AFRICA OF ARMS AND RELATED MATERIAL OF ALL TYPES, INCLUDING THE SALE OR TRANSFER OF WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION, MILITARY VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT, PARAMILITARY POLICE EQUIPMENT, AND SPARE PARTS FOR THE AFOREMENTIONED, AND SHALL CEASE AS WELL THE PROVISION OF ALL TYPES OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES, AND GRANTS OF LICENSING ARRANGEMENTS, FOR THE MANUFACTURE OR MAINTENANCE OF THE AFOREMENTIONED:
3. CALLS ON ALL STATES TO REVIEW, HAVING REGARD TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESOLUTION, ALL EXISTING CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH AND LICENCES GRANTED TO SOUTH AFRICA RELATING TO THE MANUFACTURE AND MAINTENANCE OF ARMS, AMMUNITION OF ALL TYPES AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT, WITH A VIEW TO TERMINATING THEM:
4. FURTHER DECIDES THAT ALL STATES SHALL REFRAIN FROM ANY COOPERATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA IN THE MANUFACTURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS:
5. CALLS UPON ALL STATES, INCLUDING STATES NON-MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS, TO ACT STRICTLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS RESOLUTION:
6. REQUEST THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO REPORT TO THE COUNCIL ON THE PROGRESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS RESOLUTION, THE FIRST REPORT TO BE SUBMITTED NOT LATER THAN 1 MAY 1978:
7. DECIDES TO KEEP THIS ITEM ON ITS AGENDA FOR FURTHER ACTION, AS APPROPRIATE, IN THE LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS.

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UNCLASSIFIED  
 FROM F C O 012017Z AUGUST 79  
 TO FLASH LUSAKA  
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 600 OF 1 AUGUST.  
 INFO IMMEDIATE PRETORIA, UKMIS NEW YORK, PRIORITY WASHINGTON,  
 LAGOS, MOD UK DS 13 (S. SMITH), DS 11.

M I P T: PLESSEY CONTRACT.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF ARTICLE IN "THE GUARDIAN" OF 1 AUGUST.

PLESSEY IS BELIEVED TO BE TRAINING MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE IN THE UK. THE BRITISH ELECTRONICS AND COMMUNICATIONS FIRM IS THOUGHT TO BE TEACHING THEM THE OPERATION OF AMERICAN COMPUTER EQUIPMENT TO BE USED AT A RADAR TRACKING STATION IN THE TRANSVAAL. THE BRITISH ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT, WHICH ORIGINALLY OBTAINED EVIDENCE THAT PLESSEY WAS TRAINING SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL, HAS LODGED A COMPLAINT WITH THE FOREIGN OFFICE. LABOUR M.P.'S ATTENDING THE COMMONWEALTH LEADERS CONFERENCE ARE EXPECTED TO RAISE THE MATTER WITH HEADS OF STATE IN LUSAKA. PLESSEY LAST NIGHT REFUSED TO COMMENT. THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE BELIEVED TO BE AIR FORCE PERSONNEL BEING TRAINED ON DIGITAL EQUIPMENT CORPORATION (DEC) PDP 11/34 COMPUTERS INCORPORATED INTO A RADAR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM PRODUCED BY PLESSEY. DEC IS AN AMERICAN MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATION WHICH HAS A COMPUTER ASSEMBLY AND TESTING PLANT IN THE IRISH REPUBLIC. THE PDP 11/34 BELONGS TO THE CORPORATION'S BIGGEST-SELLING FAMILY OF COMPUTERS. DESCRIBED AS A "MINI-COMPUTER," THE CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT ALONE COSTS ABOUT POUNDS STERLING 15,000. WHILE BRITAIN AND AMERICA BOTH OBSERVE THE UNITED NATIONS MANDATORY ARMS' EMBARGO AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA, THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN APPLICATION, PARTICULARLY WHERE COMPUTERS ARE CONCERNED. WHILE BRITAIN LIMITS ITS RESTRICTIONS TO THE SALE OF WEAPONS' SYSTEMS, AMERICA BANS THE EXPORT OF ANY COMPUTERS FOR USE BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN ARMY AND POLICE. A SPOKESMAN FOR DEC SAID YESTERDAY THAT THE COMPANY "CANNOT CONTROL" THE USE PLESSEY MAKES OF ITS EQUIPMENT. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT DEC ITSELF "HAS NOT CHOSEN TO HAVE A PRESENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA". THE FACT THAT SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE RECEIVING TRAINING AT PLESSEY WOULD SUGGEST THE COMPANY IS SUPPLYING THE NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT WITH AN UP-DATED RADAR SYSTEM. IF, AS THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT HAS BEEN INFORMED, THE EQUIPMENT IS TO BE USED IN THE TRANSVAAL, IT IS LIKELY TO BE INCORPORATED INTO PROJECT NASSAU, ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S KEY DEFENCE FACILITIES. IT IS A COMPUTERISED UNDERGROUND COMPLEX SITUATED AT DEVON. IN THE EASTERN TRANSVAAL, AND LINKED TO OBSERVATION STATIONS ON THE COUNTRY'S BORDERS. MODERNISED IN THE EARLY 1970S AT A COST OF SEVERAL MILLIONS OF POUNDS, THE RADAR CENTRE IS BELIEVED TO PROVIDE AIR SURVEILLANCE FACILITIES EXTENDING FAR BEYOND THE COUNTRY'S BORDERS. PLESSEY RADAR HAS ESTABLISHED ITSELF IN THE MILITARY GROUND-SYSTEM MARKET, LARGELY THROUGH THE SUCCESS OF THE AR-3D THREE DIMENSIONAL LONG-RANGE RADAR SYSTEM WHICH IS COMPLEMENTED BY GF75 GAP-FILLING SYSTEM. THE COMPANY'S RECENT CONTRACTS INCLUDE THE SALE OF RADAR EQUIPMENT TO THE IVORY COAST, GABON, CAMEROUN AND LIBYA. THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT IN ITS LETTER OF PROTEST TO THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, LORD CARRINGTON, SAID THAT THE PRESENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL ON A TRAINING SCHEME IN THE UK WAS "IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH UNDERTAKINGS BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THAT ALL FORMS OF MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND SOUTH AFRICA HAVE CEASED". "WE WOULD BE EQUALLY DISTURBED BY ANY BREACH OF THE UN MANDATORY ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA".

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FOLUX 036/01

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ZZ LUSAKA

GRS 135

RESTRICTED

FM FCO 012016Z AUG 79

TO FLASH LUSAKA

TELEGRAM NUMBER 599 OF 1 AUGUST

INFO IMMEDIATE PRETORIA, UKMIS NEW YORK,

PRIORITY WASHINGTON, LAGOS, MODUK DS13 (SMITH), DS11

MIPT : PLESSEY CONTRACT

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT :

QUOTE

THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT HAS RECEIVED RELIABLE INFORMATION THAT A NUMBER OF SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE PERSONNEL ARE CURRENTLY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM ON A TRAINING COURSE WITH PLESSEY LTD., WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT CERTAIN ITEMS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT ARE BEING OR HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED TO SOUTH AFRICA.

IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THIS VISIT IS IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH UNDERTAKINGS BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THAT ALL FORMS OF MILITARY CO-OPERATION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND SOUTH AFRICA HAVE CEASED. WE WOULD BE EQUALLY DISTURBED BY ANY BREACH OF THE UNITED NATIONS MANDATORY ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA.

I AM WRITING TO ASK YOU TO INVESTIGATE THESE REPORTS AS A MATTER OF URGENCY AND TO ESTABLISH IF SUCH A VISIT IS TAKING PLACE AND IF THERE HAS BEEN ANY BREACH OF THE ARMS EMBARGO.

UNQUOTE

CARRINGTON

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CONFIDENTIAL

FROM F.C.O. 012015Z AUG

TO FLASH LUSAKA

TELEGRAM NUMBER 598 OF 1 AUGUST 1979

INFO IMMEDIATE PRETORIA, UKMIS NEW YORK, PRIORITY WASHINGTON,  
LAGOS, MODUK (FOR S SMITH DS 13 AND DS11)

FOR SECRETARY OF STATE FROM LPS.

PLESSEY CONTRACT AND THE ARMS EMBARGO

1. THE LETTER FROM THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ALLEGES THAT THERE ARE SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE (SADF) PERSONNEL IN BRITAIN UNDER TRAINING AT PLESSEY LIMITED. THE TEXT OF THE LETTER IS IN FIRST IFT. THE ARTICLE IN TODAY'S GUARDIAN GOES INTO GREATER DETAIL AND THE TEXT IS IN MY SECOND IFT. TEXT OF OPERATIVE PARAGRAPHS OF UN ARMS EMBARGO (SCR418 IS IN THIRD IFT.
2. MOD CONFIRM THAT THERE ARE 12 MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE TRAINING AT PLESSEY LTD IN CIVIL GUISE. THEIR PRESENCE WAS NOT KNOWN BY FCO UNTIL TODAY AND MOD SAY THAT THEY WERE ONLY AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE WHEN PLESSEY REQUESTED PERMISSION FOR THEM TO VISIT AN MOD ESTABLISHMENT, ALTHOUGH MOD ADMIT THAT THEY PROBABLY HAD VISITED ANOTHER MOD ESTABLISHMENT WITHOUT CLEARANC BEING SOUGHT FROM MOD HEADQUARTERS.
3. THE ALLEGATIONS REGARDING THE EXPORT OF EQUIPMENT PROBABLY REFER TO THE LICENCES ORIGINALLY GRANTED BY THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION AND PRIOR TO THE UN MANDATORY ARMS EMBARGO FOR THE EXPORT OF PLESSEY AR3D AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL/AIR DEFENCE RADAR, ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WAS FOR USE IN PEACETIME FOR THE CONTROL OF CIVIL AIR TRAFFIC. HOWEVER, THE EQUIPMENT IS UNDERSTOOD TO BE DESTINED FOR USE IN THE NASSAU PROJECT WHICH IS A GENERAL UP-DATING OF SOUTH AFRICA'S AIR DEFENCE/AIR CONTROL SYSTEM. POLICY HAS BEEN THAT DUAL-PURPOSE GOODS AND EQUIPMENT, IE. GOODS FOR CIVIL USE BUT ALSO USED BY THE ARMED FORCES, SHOULD CONTINUE TO RECEIVE LICENCES FOR EXPORT UNLESS THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY INTENDED FOR SOLELY MILITARY PURPOSES. THE PLESSEY EQUIPMENT CLEARLY FALLS INTO THIS CATEGORY AND IT WAS ON THIS BASIS THAT THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION AGREED TO THE GRANT OF LICENCES.
4. MY FOURTH IFT CONTAINS A SUGGESTED LINE TO TAKE WITH THE PRESS. WE ARE ALREADY GETTING MANY ENQUIRIES. THE MAIN DIFFICULTY CONCERNS THE PRESENCE OF THE SADF PERSONNEL IN THIS COUNTRY. I PREFER SUGGESTED LINE TO THE ALTERNATIVE OF REFUSING TO COMMENT. GRATEFUL FOR APPROVAL OF THE LINE, PREFERABLY IN TIME FOR THE 12.30 NEWS CONFERENCE.
5. ALTHOUGH THE LICENCES WERE GRANTED IN THE PERIOD 1976-78, ONLY A SMALL PART OF THE EQUIPMENT APPEARS ACTUALLY TO HAVE BEEN EXPORTED. I RECOMMEND THAT OFFICIALS SHOULD DISCUSS WITH MOD AND, IF NECESSARY, WITH PLESSEY LTD, THE FUTURE OF THIS CONTRACT AND IN PARTICULAR THE CONTINUED PRESENCE IN THIS COUNTRY OF SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE PERSONNEL. THE IDEAL SOLUTION WOULD BE TO KEEP THE CONTRACT BUT TO ENSURE THAT ANY FUTURE TRAINING TAKES PLACE IN SOUTH AFRICA SO AS TO OBTAIN THE NEED FOR THE PRESENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENCE FORCE PERSONNEL IN THIS COUNTRY. IF YOU AGREE, I WILL INSTRUCT OFFICIALS TO INITIATE DISCUSSIONS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.
6. WE COULD ASK THE HOME SECRETARY TO ORDER THE IMMEDIATE DEPORTATION OF THE SADF PERSONNEL BUT THIS COULD HAVE SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR RELATIONS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS, PARTICULARLY OVER NAMIBIA, AND FOR OUR COMMERCIAL REPUTATION. ON BALANCE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT WE SHOULD NOT TAKE THIS DRASTIC ACTION UNLESS YOU JUDGE IT ESSENTIAL IN THE CONTEXT OF CHGM. IF SO WE MIGHT BEST ASK THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO AGREE TO WITHDRAW THEIR PEOPLE IMMEDIATELY SO AS TO DEFUSE THE SITUATION.

CARRINGTON