

PS

PS/SIR I GILMOUR

PS/MR LUCE

PS/PUS

MR DAY

SIR L ALLINSON

MR R WADE-GERY CABINET OFFICE
NO 10 DOWNING STREET

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IMMEDIATE

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RESIDENT CLERK

CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON 212200Z FEB 81

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NO 630 OF 21 FEBRUARY

INFO CAPE TOWN, PRETORIA, UKMIS NEW YORK

INFO SAVING MAPUTO, DAR ES SALAAM, LUSAKA, SALISBURY, LAGOS, PARIS,
BONN, OTTAWA, GABORONE, LUANDA

LAGOS TELNO 181 AND FCO TELNO 39 TO ABIDJAN: NAMIBIA

1. YOUR AND THE PM'S DISCUSSIONS ABOUT SOUTHERN AFRICA WITH THE AMERICANS NEXT WEEK WILL TAKE PLACE AT A TIME WHEN THEIR POLICY IN THE REGION IS STILL UNFORMED.

2. A NUMBER OF PRESSURES, MOSTLY DOMESTIC, HAVE COMBINED TO ENSURE THAT THE US IS AT PRESENT RELECTANT TO TAKE INITIATIVES OVER AFRICA AND UNWILLING TO BE RUSHED INTO DECISIONS. THE STATE DEPT ARE UNCONVINCED THAT A SHOWDOWN ON UN SANCTIONS IS IMMINENT AND ARE RELUCTANT TO TAKE ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE MOST LIMITED AND NON-CONTROVERSIAL STEPS TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION BEFORE AN OVERALL STRATEGY HAS BEEN WORKED OUT AND SOLD IN WASHINGTON. CROCKER HAS STILL NOT BEEN NOMINATED, IS THEREFORE WORKING IN SOMETHING OF A VACUUM AND IS HAVING PROBLEMS IN FOCUSSING HIS SUPERIORS' ATTENTION ON AN ISSUE WHICH SEEMS LESS IMMEDIATELY THREATENING THAN, SAY,

ON AN ISSUE WHICH SEEMS LESS IMMEDIATELY THREATENING THAN, SAY, CENTRAL AMERICA.

3. WE MUST ALSO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE BREEZE OF BOURBONISM THAT IS TO BE FELT HERE. THERE IS A STRONG BODY OF OPINION IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY THAT WOULD POSITIVELY WELCOME AN EARLY CONFRONTATION. THEY ARGUE THAT:

A) THIS WOULD FORCE THE US TO SIDE WITH SOUTH AFRICA (SOMETHING WHICH THEY MAINTAIN IS IN AMERICAN STRATEGIC AND POLITICAL INTERESTS):

B) THE AFRICANS, NOT THE AMERICANS, WOULD SUFFER MOST FROM BAD RELATIONS BETWEEN THEM:

C) IT IS TIME THE US SHOWED THAT THE UN WILL IN FUTURE HAVE LESS INFLUENCE OVER AMERICAN POLICY: AND

D) THE US SHOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT IT IS NO LONGER NEUTRAL BETWEEN THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND AN ANGOLA DOMINATED BY THE CUBANS, WHO ARE SEEN HERE AS THE SURROGATES THROUGH WHICH THE UNACCEPTABLE EXTENSION OF SOVIET POWER BEYOND ITS TRADITIONAL SPHERES OF INFLUENCE IS BEING PURSUED.

SUCH ARGUMENTS CARRY CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT AT A TIME OF ACUTE US CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET ACTIVITY IN THE THIRD WORLD.

4. HAVING JUST RETURNED FROM AFRICA, YOU WILL BE WELL PLACED TO JUDGE HOW BEST TO APPROACH THE QUESTION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA WITH THE AMERICANS, BUT AS SEEN FROM HERE, WHATEVER IS SAID WILL HAVE TO TAKE DUE ACCOUNT OF THIS DOMESTIC DIMENSION INCLUDING THE FOCUS ON CUBANISM. I AM SURE YOU ARE AWARE OF THE SCEPTICISM IN REPUBLICAN CIRCLES ABOUT THE EXISTING UN PROCESS FOR NAMIBIA. WE SHOULD CERTAINLY CONTINUE TO POINT OUT TO THE AMERICANS THE INTERNATIONAL DANGERS OF SETTING ASIDE WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED OVER NAMIBIA, AND WE SHOULD GIVE THEM EVERY ENCOURAGEMENT TO CONSULT AS WIDELY AS POSSIBLE WHILE CONSIDERING THEIR POLICY. SUCH A PROCESS OF CONSULTATION WOULD, WE HOPE, SHOW THE AFRICANS THAT THE US IS SERIOUS ABOUT DEVELOPING POLICY WHICH TAKES ACCOUNT OF THEIR VIEWS AND DISCOURAGE THEM FROM NARROWING AMERICAN OPTIONS THROUGH A PREMATURE MOVE TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

FCO PASS SAVING MAPUTO, DAR ES SALAAM, LUSAKA, SALISBURY, LAGOS, PARIS, BONN, OTTAWA, GABORONE, LUANDA.

HENDERSON

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