

6

**SECRET**

GRS 200A

**S E C R E T**

DESK BY FCO 260900Z FEB 80

FM CAPE TOWN EMBASSY 260645Z FEB 80

TO FLASH SALISBURY

TEL NO 24 OF 26 FEBRUARY

INFO IMMEDIATE FCO

SALISBURY TEL NO 794

**RHODESIA: THE ELECTION**

PIK BOTHA ASKED ME TO CALL YESTERDAY EVENING. I AM REPORTING OTHER PARTS OF THE CONVERSATION SEPARATELY. THIS TELEGRAM DEALS WITH HIS URGENT ADVICE THAT YOU SHOULD NOT (REPEAT NOT) USE YOUR POWERS TO PREVENT VOTING TAKING PLACE IN SPECIFIC LOCALITIES.

**2. PIK'S REASONS FOR SAYING THIS WERE THREEFOLD:**

FIRST IT WOULD NOT ACHIEVE VERY MUCH; SECONDLY IT MIGHT HARM THE PARTIES - IT WAS MEANT TO HELP - "THE WAYS OF AFRICAN POLITICS ARE STRANGE"; THIRDLY IT WOULD PROVOKE INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM. I WAS SURPRISED BY THIS AND PROBED TO FIND OUT WHAT WAS REALLY ON HIS MIND, BUT HE WOULD NOT GO ANY FURTHER. I TOLD HIM THAT YOU HAD BEEN GIVING CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO THIS QUESTION AND THAT SPEAKING OFF THE CUFF I BELIEVED THE DECISION WOULD COME DOWN AGAINST USING YOUR POWERS. BUT IT WAS A VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEM AND YOU WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE LIKELY REACTIONS OF MUZOREWA AND WALLS. HE TOOK THIS POINT ALL RIGHT AND SAID THAT HE HOPED YOU WOULD ANNOUNCE IN ADVANCE OF THE VOTING THAT YOU WOULD ONLY DECIDE AFTER IT HAD ENDED WHETHER THE ELECTION HAD BEEN FREE AND FAIR. THERE WAS, HE THOUGHT, SOME ADVANTAGE IN LEAVING SOME DOUBT IN PEOPLE'S MINDS WHAT YOUR DECISION ON THIS WOULD BE. I SAID I WOULD PASS THIS ON.

3. THIS SHOULD GIVE DUFF THE OPENING TO ASK PIK BOTHA WHEN HE SEES HIM ON THURSDAY MORNING TO USE HIS INFLUENCE ON MUZOREWA AND WALLS TO ACT SENSIBLY.

LEAHY

**F I L E S**

RHOD D	DEF D
OADS	IPD
NAD	OID
PUSD	NEWS D
PLANNING STAFF	PS
CCD	PS/LPS
FRD	PS/MR LUCE
ECD (E)	PS/MR RIDLEY
UND	PS/MR HURD
LEGAL ADVISERS	PS/MR MARTEN
(MR FREELAND)	PS/PUS
ECON D	SIR D MAITLAND

SIR A ACLAND  
LORD N G LENNOX

MR DAY  
MR FERGUSSON  
MR ASPIN  
MR MILLS  
CPO

ADDITIONAL DIST  
RHODESIA POLICY

**SECRET**