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FM SALISBURY 021300Z MAR 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 903 OF 2 MARCH 1980

INFO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA MAPUTO GABORONE DAR ES SALAAM LUANDA LAGOS
NAIROBI CANBERRA WELLINGTON CAPE TOWN SUVA WASHINGTON PRETORIA
ADDIS ABABA OTTAWA UKMIS NEW YORK
PRIORITY PEKING MOSCOW DAKAR KINSHASA KHARTOUM TOKYO
EEC POSTS KINGSTON BRIDGETOWN DACCA NEW DELHI SINGAPORE
GEORGETOWN FREETOWN PORT LOUIS PORT OF SPAIN LILONGWE
VALETTA BANJUL COLOMBO ACCRA KUALA LUMPUR NICOSIA
OSLO STOCKHOLM LISBON MADRID ATHENS MBABANE ABIDJAN
INFO SAVING NASSAU MASERU CASTRIES HONIARA NUKUALOFA VICTORIA
TARAWA UKDEL NATO SOFIA BUDAPEST BUCHAREST BELGRADE CAIRO ALGIERS
TRIPOLI RABAT TEHRAN.

OUR TELNO 889 : ELECTION

1. A TOTAL OF 2,699,450 VOTES WERE CAST IN THE ELECTION.

THE DISTRICT BREAKDOWN IS AS FOLLOWS:

MATABELELAND NORTH	403,162
MATABELELAND SOUTH	178,007
MASHONALAND WEST	295,858
MASHONALAND CENTRAL	185,237
MASHONALAND EAST	638,935
MANICALAND	301,673
VICTORIA	348,990
MIDLANDS	347,588

IN TWO OF THE PROVINCES, MASHONALAND EAST AND MATABELELAND NORTH, THE NUMBER OF VOTES CAST EXCEEDED THE PRIOR ESTIMATE OF THE VOTING POPULATION. THIS WAS NOT UNEXPECTED, SINCE THE POPULATION ESTIMATES WERE RECOGNISED TO BE OUTDATED. PEOPLE WERE ALSO NOT OBLIGED TO VOTE IN THEIR HOME PROVINCES. THE ESTIMATED TURN OUT IN PERCENTAGE TERMS IS ABOUT 94%. BALLOT BOXES WERE TRANSFERRED YESTERDAY FROM POLLING STATIONS TO DISTRICT CENTRES AND THE NUMBER OF VOTING PAPERS WILL TODAY BE CHECKED AGAINST THE NUMBER OF COUNTERFOILS, THE SO-CALLED VERIFICATION PROCESS. THE OFFICIAL COUNT CAN THEN BEGIN. THERE HAS BEEN NO SERIOUS SECURITY INCIDENT SINCE MY TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE.

2. BOTH THE UANC AND THE PF HAVE MADE ALLEGATIONS OF IRREGULARITIES IN THE POLLING. MUZOREWA HAS COMPLAINED THAT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE COULD NOT BE EXPRESSED IN THE FACE OF ZANU(PF) INTIMIDATION AND ALSO MADE ALLEGATIONS OF MULTIPLE VOTING. THE PF HAVE STATED THAT IF THEY CONCLUDE THAT THE ELECTIONS WERE SO UNFAIR AND SO UNFREE AS TO BELIEVE THE DEMOCRATIC WILL OF THE PEOPLE THEY WOULD NOT HESITATE TO DECLARE THEM NULL AND VOID. IT IS NATURAL FOR THE UANC AND PF TO MAKE SUCH STATEMENTS TO GIVE THEMSELVES AN EXCUSE IN CASE OF ELECTORAL DISASTER AND WE DO NOT ATTACH MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THEM.

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NKOMO HAS TOLD HIS MEN AT THE ASSEMBLY PLACES THAT THE RESULT MUST BE ACCEPTED. THE RHODESIA FRONT HAVE SAID THAT THE ELECTION COULD NOT BE REGARDED AS FREE AND FAIR BECAUSE OF INTIMIDATION BUT HAVE DELAYED AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT UNTIL AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESULT. ZANU(PF) HAVE MADE NO OFFICIAL COMMENT BUT THEIR SPOKESMEN ARE ANTICIPATING A LAND-SLIDE VICTORY IN SOME DISTRICTS.

3. THE COMMONWEALTH OBSERVER GROUP ARE TO ISSUE AN INTERIM REPORT ON THE ELECTIONS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AT 1630Z TONIGHT. THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT WERE TO HAVE DISTRIBUTED COPIES OF THE REPORT TO HIGH COMMISSIONS IN LONDON THIS MORNING. THE INDICATIONS STILL ARE THAT THE COMMONWEALTH REPORT WILL BE NOT UNHELPFUL.

4. OTHER INTERIM REPORTS HAVE BEEN ISSUED BY THE UNITED STATES FREEDOM HOUSE OBSERVERS, THE CANADIAN NON-GOVERNMENT OBSERVER TEAM AND THE IRISH OFFICIAL OBSERVER GROUP. FREEDOM HOUSE PRAISED THE ELECTION TEAM FOR PROVIDING AN ESSENTIALLY FREE ELECTORAL PROCESS. THEY CONCLUDE THAT THE NATIONWIDE ACTIVE SECURITY EFFORT WAS ESSENTIAL BUT THEY ARE NOT SATISFIED THAT THE ELECTION WAS ENTIRELY FAIR BECAUSE OF THE CLIMATE OF FEAR IN WHICH THE PARTIES COMPETE. DESPITE THIS THEY CONCLUDE THAT THEY WILL APPROXIMATELY REPRESENT THE DISTRIBUTION OF CURRENT POLITICAL VIEWS. THE CANADIAN GROUP HAVE A NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SECURITY FORCES, ARRESTS OF ZANU(PF) AGENTS ETC. BUT CONCLUDE THAT THE VOTING RESULT WILL REFLECT THE BEST AVAILABLE EXPRESSION OF THE WISHES OF THE PEOPLE BECAUSE MOST VOTERS WERE CONVINCED THAT THEIR VOTES WERE SECRET. THEY END WITH A WARNING NOTE THAT A GOVERNMENT WHICH RELIED ON WHITE REPRESENTATIVES TO THE EXCLUSION OF A BLACK MAJORITY PARTY WOULD BE A RECIPE FOR INSTABILITY. THE IRISH OBSERVER GROUP CONCLUDE THAT THE ELECTION RESULTS SHOULD PROVIDE A FAIR EXPRESSION OF THE WISHES OF THE ELECTORATE.

5. THE TEXT OF A SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT BY THE BRITISH M.P.'S IS IN MIFT TO FCO ONLY. THEIR REASON FOR ISSUING THIS IS THAT THEY BELIEVED THAT THEIR TRIBUTES MIGHT BE OVERSHADOWED IF INCLUDED IN THE MAIN REPORT.

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[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

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FILES	ECON D		ADDITIONAL DIST
RHOD D	DEF D	SIR A ACLAND	RHODESIA POLICY
OADS	IPD	LORD N G LENNOX	
NAD	OID	MR DAY	
PUSD	NEWS D	MR FERGUSSON	
PLANNING STAFF	PS	SIR L ALLINSON	
CCD	PS/LPS	MR MILLS	
FRD	PS/MR LUCE	CPO	
ECD (E)	PS/MR RIDLEY		
UND	PS/MR HURD		
LEGAL ADVISERS	PS/MR MARTEN		(REPETITION TO LUANDA REFERRED FOR
(MR FREELAND)	PS/PUS		DEPARTMENTAL DECISION REPEATED
(MR RIFOOT)	SIR D MAITLAND ₂		AS REQUESTED TO OTHER POSTS)

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