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FROM PRETORIA 091020Z JUL 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 196 OF 9 JUL

INFO IMMEDIATE SALISBURY

SALISBURY TELEGRAMS NOS 1746 AND 1747 : ZIMBABWE/SOUTH AFRICA

1. PIK BOTHA SURPRISED EVERYONE YESTERDAY, INCLUDING HIS OWN STAFF IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN MISSION IN SALISBURY, BY LETTING IT BE KNOWN PUBLICLY THAT HE WAS RECALLING NOT ONLY THE HEAD OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MISSION, MR VAN VUUREN, BUT ALSO THE DEPUTY, MR NEL. THIS DRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENT CAUSED CONFUSION TO A POINT WHERE HE FELT IT NECESSARY TO TRY TO CLARIFY MATTERS LATER IN THE DAY.

2. DURING A TELEVISION INTERVIEW LAST NIGHT PIK BOTHA SPOKE AS FOLLOWS :

BEGINS QUOTE

SO THE STATE OR STATUS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WAS A SUBJECT THAT HAD TO BE DECIDED ON AND NOW IT WOULD SEEM TO ME ON THE BASIS.... OF INFORMATION MUGABE CONVEYED TO ME THROUGH MY REPRESENTATIVE AND MEMBERS OF HIS GOVERNMENT CONVEYED TO ME THAT THEY WOULD PREFER NOT TO HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA. I HAVE DONE NOTHING. I HAVE DONE NOTHING TO HAMPER THE CONCLUSION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BUT OF COURSE IT IS A TWO-WAY AFFAIR. IT IS A RECIPROCAL MATTER AND IF ZIMBABWE DOESN'T WANT TO HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ME, THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO. I AM CERTAINLY NOT GOING TO BEG FOR IT. I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE IN THAT COUNTRY'S INTERESTS. SO IF MR MUGABE DOESN'T WANT IT.... WELL, THAT'S THAT. UNQUOTE.

ASKED IF THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TALKS ON THE ISSUE WITH MR MUGABE, MR BOTHA SAID : QUOTE

NO. MY REPRESENTATIVE HAS HAD TALKS WITH HIM ON THIS VERY ISSUE AND IT IS FOR THEM TO INDICATE WHAT IT IS THAT THEY WANT AS FAR AS RELATIONS ARE CONCERNED. NOW IF THEY WANT SOME OTHER FORM OF RELATIONS....A CONSULATE-GENERAL, TRADE RELATIONS, THEN IT IS UP TO THEM TO TELL ME WHAT KIND OF RELATIONS THEY DO WANT SO I CAN TAKE THE MATTER UP WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT. IT DOESN'T MEAN TO SAY THAT IF THEY PROPOSE A CERTAIN FORM OF RELATIONS THAT WE WOULD NECESSARILY ACCEPT IT. BUT I AM JUST TRYING TO GET TO THE POINT TO KNOW WHAT IT IS THEY WANT. UNQUOTE. ENDS.

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3. HAWKINS TELLS ME THAT BEHIND THE SCENES THINGS ARE NOT HAPPENING QUITE AS PRECIPITATELY AS PUBLIC APPEARANCES SUGGEST, BUT HE ADMITS THAT UNCERTAINTY REIGNS. AS HE UNDERSTANDS IT, IT IS STILL THE INTENTION OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO SETTLE THE FUTURE NATURE OF THEIR RESPECTIVE MISSIONS THROUGH DISCUSSION. HE ALSO TELLS ME THAT AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ZIMBABWE VICE-CONSUL IN CAPE TOWN REPORTED ON THE RADIO THIS MORNING THAT THE CONSULATE THERE WOULD BE REMAINING OPEN WAS PROMPTED BY A RUSH OF APPLICANTS YESTERDAY FOR NEW ZIMBABWE PASSPORTS. THE VICE-CONSUL WAS NOT SO MUCH REFERRING TO FUTURE DECISIONS ABOUT THE MAINTENANCE OR CLOSURE OF THE OFFICE AS TO THE FACT THAT IT IS BUSINESS AS USUAL FOR THE TIME BEING.

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