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FM PRETORIA 311515Z OCT 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 451 OF 31 OCTOBER

INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON, OTTAWA, PARIS AND BONN

INFO PRIORITY DAR ES SALAAM

INFO SAVING LUANDA, LUSAKA, MAPUTO, GABORONE, SALISBURY AND LAGOS.

MY TELNO 448: NAMIBIA.

Read is full

ms.

1. NAMIBIA OCCUPIED A LARGE PART OF THE PUS'S DISCUSSION YESTERDAY WITH PIK BOTHA WHICH IN ALL LASTED AN HOUR.
2. AFTER THE PUS HAD SAID THAT HE FELT MORE HOPEFUL AFTER LAST WEEK'S DISCUSSION PIK BOTHA AGREED THAT AN ADVANCE HAD BEEN MADE IN THAT HE AND BRIAN URQUHART HAD UNDERSTOOD CLEARLY WHAT THE LIMITATIONS WERE ON EACH OTHER'S FREEDOM OF MANOEUVRE. HE SPOKE WARMLY OF URQUHART'S SINCERITY AND ACKNOWLEDGED, ALBEIT UNENTHUSIASTICALLY, SOME IMPROVEMENT IN AHTISAARI'S THINKING. HE SAID THAT URQUHART NOW CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THERE COULD BE NO SETTLEMENT WITHOUT A MEETING OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED. THIS WAS A FUNDAMENTAL SOUTH AFRICAN REQUIREMENT, SINCE THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT COULD NOT TAKE THE DECISION ALONE TO GO AHEAD WITH AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT AND HAD TO ASSOCIATE THE INTERNAL PARTIES WITH IT.
3. PIK BOTHA WENT ON TO EXPHASISE THAT NO SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT COULD SURVIVE (AND HE CERTAINLY WOULD NOT SURVIVE AS FOREIGN MINISTER) IF IT HAD TO TAKE THE BLAME FOR ALLOWING SWAPO TO COME TO POWER THROUGH DUBIOUS ELECTORAL METHODS. IF IT CAME TO A CHOICE BETWEEN THAT AND ACCEPTING TROUBLE AND CONTINUED UNCERTAINTY IN NAMIBIA AND INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS, THE SAG WOULD HAVE NO OPTION BUT TO ACCEPT THE LATTER. HE DID NOT SAY THIS OUT OF DEFIANCE OR ARROGANTLY SEMICOLON ON THE OTHER HAND HE DID NOT WISH THE PUS TO BE UNDER ANY ILLUSIONS.
4. THE PUS SAID THAT IF THERE WAS TO BE A MEETING IT WOULD HAVE TO TAKE PLACE QUICKLY IF THE MOMENTUM WAS NOT TO BE LOST AND THINGS WERE NOT TO COME APART. PIK BOTHA SAID THAT WHEN DURING THE COURSE OF THE RHODESIAN NEGOTIATIONS HE HAD REGULARLY ADVISED LORD CARRINGTON TO MOVE FASTER HE HAD RECEIVED THE ANSWER THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR PATIENCE AND CALM. HE WOULD NOW SAY THE SAME THING OVER NAMIBIA. HE BELIEVED THAT IF AN AGREEMENT WAS RUSHED THROUGH NOW AND, SAY, SWAPO WON THE ELECTION, THERE WOULD BE A NORTH/SOUTH CIVIL WAR IN NAMIBIA BETWEEN THE OVAMBOS AND THE DAMARAS AND THE BASTERS ON THE OTHER. THIS MADE IT DESIRABLE THAT THERE SHOULD BE SOME AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES ON THE KIND OF CONSTITUTION THAT WOULD BE ENACTED AFTER INDEPENDENCE. IF SUCH AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED THERE COULD THEN BE A FORM OF PLEBISCITE TO DECIDE ON IT.

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5. I SAID THAT WHILE THE SAG WOULD LIKE TO BROADEN THE SCOPE OF THE DISCUSSIONS IN THIS WAY, THE FRONT LINE STATES WOULD CERTAINLY WANT TO TIE THE SOUTH AFRICANS DOWN TO TALKING ONLY ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCR 435. THE IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THE WEEK'S DISCUSSIONS WITH THE UN FOR THE SOUTH AFRICANS SEEMED TO ME THAT URQUHART, AHTISAARI AND THEIR COLLEAGUES HAD NOW COME ROUND TO ACCEPT THAT A MEETING WAS NECESSARY. UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, THERE WERE SOME SIGNS THAT THE FRONT LINE STATES, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN MORE IN FAVOUR OF A MEETING THAN THE SECRETARIAT, WERE NOW HAVING SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT IT AND THE LATEST NEWS FROM NEW YORK ABOUT THE CONSULTATIONS THAT WERE TAKING PLACE THERE WAS SLIGHTLY DISQUIETING. FOURIE SAID THAT THEY HAD HAD SIMILAR INDICATIONS FROM EKSTEEN. PIK BOTHA MADE SOME SLIGHTLY DISMISSIVE NOISES ABOUT THE FLS AND SAID THAT HE COULD NOT ANY LONGER SELL TO THE NAMIBIAN PARTIES AN AGREEMENT BASED SOLELY ON SCR 435.

6. IN SUBSEQUENT PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH THE PUS FOURIE WAS AT PAINS TO SOFTEN THE ROUGH EDGES OF SOME OF PIK BOTHA'S REMARKS. HE SAID THAT IN SPEAKING TO VISITORS SUCH AS THE PUS OR THE AMBASSADOR, PIK BOTHA TENDED TO EXAGGERATE. BUT IN CABINET, WHILE HE WOULD BE EQUALLY ROBUST, HE WAS MUCH MORE MODERATE IN SUBSTANCE AND SHOWED THAT HE TOOK REAL ACCOUNT OF WHAT HIS VISITORS HAD SAID TO HIM. IN PARTICULAR, FOURIE PLAYED DOWN THE IMPORTANCE OF PIK'S REMARKS ABOUT CONSTITUTION-MAKING AT A CONFERENCE AND SAID THAT HE DOUBTED WHETHER THIS WOULD REALLY BE NECESSARY OR WHETHER THE PARTIES THEMSELVES WOULD WANT TO GET INTO IT AT A MEETING. HE ALSO CONFIRMED THE GOOD RELATIONSHIP WHICH HE AND URQUHART HAD DEVELOPED AND THE PUS TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL HIM THAT WE ALSO APPRECIATED THE PART THAT HE HIMSELF HAD PLAYED IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

FCO PASS SAVING ADDRESSEES.

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