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TO PRIORITY F C O

TEL NO 451 OF 30 DECEMBER

INFO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK, PRETORIA

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

*A good summary of
the situation on the eve of
the P.I.N.*

And

PRETORIA TEL NO 592: NAMIBIA

1. ALTHOUGH THE DTA WILL NOT FORMALLY DECIDE UNTIL 2 JANUARY WHETHER THEY WILL ATTEND THE PIM, NO ONE HERE SERIOUSLY DOUBTS THAT THEY WILL IN FACT LEAVE FOR GENEVA IN A WEEK'S TIME AS MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL'S DELEGATION. RIAAN EKSTEEN MADE THIS CLEAR TO ME IN TALKING OVER LUNCH TODAY, 30 DECEMBER. THIS MAY THEREFORE BE A CONVENIENT TIME TO ASSESS THE PROSPECTS AS SEEN FROM HERE. I AM HOPING TO SEE PIK BOTHA AND/OR BRAND FOURIE BEFORE THE END OF THE WEEK AND MAY HAVE GLOSSES TO ADD THEREAFTER.

2. NEITHER THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT NOR THE DTA ARE APPROACHING THE PIM SIMPLY AS A MEANS OF DISCUSSING OUTSTANDING ISSUES AND SETTLING A DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION. THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE COMMITTED BY THEIR AGREEMENT TO THE U N PLAN, BUT THEY HAVE SOUGHT BY THEIR LONG DRAWN OUT NEGOTIATING TACTICS AND THE RAISING OF NEW ISSUES TO MANOEUVRE THEMSELVES INTO A POSITION WHERE IN EFFECT THEY HAVE TO BE PERSUADED TO RENEW THEIR BASIC COMMITMENT TO THE U N PLAN. THE D T A HAVE THROUGHOUT COMPLAINED OF A LACK OF CONSULTATION AND WILL NOT BE INHIBITED FROM RAISING OR REOPENING FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES. URQUHART IS RIGHT THEREFORE TO BE PREPARED FOR ALL SORTS OF DIFFICULTIES AT GENEVA (UKMIS NEW YORK TEL NO 2054).

3. BUT THE POSITION IS NOT ENTIRELY GLOOMY. MUGABE'S VICTORY IN ZIMBABWE BROUGHT HOME TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF BLACK AFRICAN NATIONALISM AND MUST HAVE LED THEM TO CONCLUDE THAT SWAPO WOULD BE LIKELY TO WIN UN-SUPERVISED ELECTIONS IN NAMIBIA. FOR REASONS WHICH I NEED NOT REHEARSE, THIS WOULD BE PROFOUNDLY UNWELCOME TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY NOW SEE CLEARLY THE DANGER OF MANDATORY SANCTIONS AND THE DIFFICULTY OF CONTRIVING FURTHER DELAY. I BELIEVE THEREFORE THAT THEY MIGHT BE BROUGHT TO SWALLOW THE BITTER PILL OF AGREEING TO UN-SUPERVISED ELECTIONS LEADING TO A SWAPO GOVERNMENT IN NAMIBIA PROVIDED THEY CAN BE SATISFIED THAT THE PROCESS WILL BE FAIR. IF SWAPO WIN, P W BOTHA MUST BE ABLE TO SAY TO HIS CRITICS HERE THAT, MUCH AS HE WOULD HAVE WISHED IT OTHERWISE, THAT WAS THE GENUINE CHOICE OF THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA ARRIVED AT BY AN IMPARTIAL PROCESS. AND HE WOULD SAY THAT IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN THE POLICY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT THAT THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA SHOULD DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUTURE. THIS EXPLAINS THE EXTREME EMPHASIS GIVEN BY THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO THE NEED FOR THE UNITED NATIONS TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR IMPARTIALITY AND TO JUSTIFY CONFIDENCE IN THE PROCESS WHICH THEY WILL SUPERVISE.

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4. COUPLED WITH THIS IS THE SOUTH AFRICAN REQUIREMENT THAT THE INTERNAL PARTIES (OR AT A MINIMUM THE DTA) SHOULD AGREE TO THE WHOLE PROCESS. IF SWAPO WIN, P W BOTHA MUST BE ABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF FROM CRITICISM BOTH HERE AND IN NAMIBIA THAT HE COMMITTED THE INTERNAL PARTIES AGAINST THEIR WILL TO A U N ELECTION IN WHOSE FAIRNESS THEY HAD NO CONFIDENCE.

5. WE NEED TO BEAR IN MIND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL'S DELEGATION IN GENEVA AND OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CABINET TO WHOM HOUGH AND FOURIE WILL REPORT. AFRIKANERS CAN BE BROUGHT TO TAKE DISAGREEABLE DECISIONS PROVIDED THEY ARE NOT GIVEN REASON TO THINK THEY ARE BEING THREATENED, TAUNTED OR CHEATED. AT SOME POINT URQUHART SHOULD IF POSSIBLE DEMONSTRATE HIS IMPARTIALITY BY COMING DOWN IN FAVOUR OF THE SOUTH AFRICANS OVER A POINT IN DISPUTE. IF THE FRONT LINE STATES COULD PREVAIL ON SWAPO TO TAKE SOME MAGNANIMOUS INITIATIVE, SUCH AS THE IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF THEIR SOUTH AFRICAN PRISONER OF WAR (SAPPER VAN DER MESCHT), THERE MIGHT BE A DISPROPORTIONATELY FAVOURABLE RESPONSE FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN SIDE. I HOPE THAT SOME MEANS CAN BE FOUND OF GETTING THROUGH TO THE FLS THAT IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO PERSUADE THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO AGREE TO WHAT WE ALL WANT: THAT THEY NEED TO BE HELPED TO DO SO; AND THAT THREATS AND PRESSURE WILL ONLY DO HARM. THEY OUGHT TO SEE IT AS A SMALL PRICE TO PAY.

6. I FEAR THERE IS LITTLE HOPE OF ACHIEVING URQUHART'S AIM OF REACHING AGREEMENT BY THE END OF THE PIM ON THE DATE FOR THE CEASEFIRE (PARAGRAPH 5 OF UKMIS NEW YORK TEL NO 2854). THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL'S DELEGATION ARE UNLIKELY TO HAVE AUTHORITY TO AGREE TO ANYTHING EXCEPT AD REFERENDUM. FOR THE SOUTH AFRICANS THE ISSUES ARE SO SERIOUS THAT THE WHOLE CABINET WILL HAVE TO BE INVOLVED AND TALKS BETWEEN THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND THE DTA, AND POSSIBLY OTHERS, WILL BE REQUIRED AFTER THE PIM. BUT BY THE SAME TOKEN, THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL'S DELEGATION ARE UNLIKELY TO BREAK OFF NEGOTIATIONS SINCE IF THE SOUTH AFRICANS CONCLUDE THAT A BREAKDOWN IS INEVITABLE THEY WILL WISH TO PREPARE THE GROUND CAREFULLY IN ORDER AS FAR AS POSSIBLE TO AVOID THE BLAME.

LEAHY [THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]

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