

GRS 600

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

ECLIPSE

DESKBY 160900Z

FM WASHINGTON 160020Z JAN 81

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 153 OF 15 JANUARY

INFO CAPE TOWN (EMBASSY), PRETORIA, PARIS, BONN, OTTAWA.

INFO SAVING UKMIS NEW YORK.

Read i full.

CAPE TOWN TELEGRAM NO 6: U.S. POLICY ON NAMIBIA

1. WE AGREE WITH MR LEAHY'S POINT THAT THE ONUS IS NOW ON THE AMERICANS TO COME UP WITH SOME NEW IDEAS, BUT GIVEN THE PRESSURE OF OTHER MAJOR ISSUES, THE INCOMING ADMINISTRATION MAY TAKE SOME TIME TO DETERMINE ITS POLICY ON NAMIBIA. CROCKER (WHO IS NOW VIRTUALLY CERTAIN TO BECOME ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR AFRICA) HAS ALREADY BEEN THINKING ABOUT POSSIBLE NEW PATHS TO A SETTLEMENT, BUT EVEN WHEN HE FORMS HIS OWN VIEW, HE WILL FACE LIVELY OPPOSITION TO VIRTUALLY ANY COURSE OF ACTION WHICH HE RECOMMENDS. IT MAY THEREFORE BE WEEKS OR MONTHS BEFORE A FIRM POLICY IS ESTABLISHED.

2. CROCKER IS AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH COULD ARISE IN THE U N WHILE U.S. ATTITUDES ARE BEING CONSIDERED AND HE ACCEPTS THAT THE NEW ADMINISTRATION SHOULD FOR THE TIME BEING CONTINUE PUBLICLY TO SUPPORT RESOLUTION 435. BUT HE WILL HAVE TO CONTEND WITH A STRONG CURRENT OF OPINION WITHIN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY WHICH REGARDS THE U N AS CONSTITUTIONALLY INCAPABLE OF PROMOTING A FAIR SETTLEMENT IN NAMIBIA AND WHICH WOULD WELCOME AN IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA WITHOUT MUCH CONCERN FOR THE CONSEQUENT DETERIORATION IN THE GOOD RELATIONS WITH BLACK AFRICA WHICH THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS CULTIVATED.

3. RESPONDING TO THIS DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE U N, CROCKER IS CONSIDERING WAYS OF PURSUING A SETTLEMENT OUTSIDE ITS AEGIS. HE BELIEVES THAT ONE COURSE OF ACTION MIGHT BE FOR THE WEST TO SAY TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS THAT THEY WANT TO ESTABLISH SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED RELATIONS BUT THAT PRETORIA'S EVASIVENESS ON NAMIBIA IS PROVING A MAJOR IMPEDIMENT; HE MIGHT AIM EVENTUALLY TO EXTRACT A STATEMENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN POSITION WHICH COULD PROVIDE A BASIS FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE FRONT LINE STATES (F L S), UNENCUMBERED BY THE U N'S PARTIALITY TOWARDS SWAPO. CROCKER THINKS THERE IS A CHANCE THAT THE F L S, WHO CONTINUE TO HAVE A PROFOUND INTEREST IN A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT RATHER THAN AN INDEFINITE FIGHT TO THE FINISH, WOULD BE WILLING TO JOIN IN SUCH A DIALOGUE. THE BASIC ELEMENT IN ALL THIS IS THAT THE U.S. WOULD PLAY A LEADING ROLE, HOPEFULLY IN HARNESS WITH THE U K. (IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT

/THESE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

THESE THOUGHTS, WHICH CROCKER HAS PUT TO US IN STRICT CONFIDENCE, SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH U.S. OR FOREIGN OFFICIALS).

4. IT IS FAR FROM CERTAIN THAT CROCKER'S PRELIMINARY VIEWS WILL PREVAIL; SOME INFLUENTIAL REPUBLICANS WOULD WELCOME AN EARLY CONFRONTATION OVER NAMIBIA OR THE ASSOCIATED PROBLEM OF ANGOLA AS A MEANS OF FORCING THE U.S. TO SIDE OUTRIGHT WITH SOUTH AFRICA BEFORE MORE SOPHISTICATED CHOICES CAN BE EXPLORED. AND OF COURSE THERE MUST BE RADICALS IN THE U N, WHO WOULD WELCOME AN EARLY CLASH, ALTHOUGH SALIM'S POINT (UKMIS TELNO 36) THAT RESPONSIBLE AFRICANS WOULD BE WISE TO AVOID AN EARLY SHOWDOWN WHICH MIGHT FORCE THE HAND OF THE INCOMING ADMINISTRATION IS ENCOURAGING. THE MAIN IMMEDIATE RISK IS THAT IF A CONFRONTATION OCCURS IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS (EITHER ON NAMIBIA OR THE ARMS EMBARGO COMMITTEE REPORT), THE AMERICANS MAY BE RUSHED INTO A POLICY WHICH DESTROYS THE PROSPECTS BOTH FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE U N PLAN AND FOR ANY ALTERNATIVE NEGOTIATIONS.

5. WE SHALL SEEK TO FEED OUR OWN VIEWS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO THOSE CONCERNED. IF CROCKER CONFIRMS HIS SUGGESTION OF A VISIT HERE NEXT WEEK BY DAY, THIS WILL PROVIDE A USEFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR A DETAILED DISCUSSION.

HENDERSON

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET]

NAMIBIA STANDARD
S AF D
OADS
UND
NAD
ECD
ERD
CABINET OFFICE

2
CONFIDENTIAL